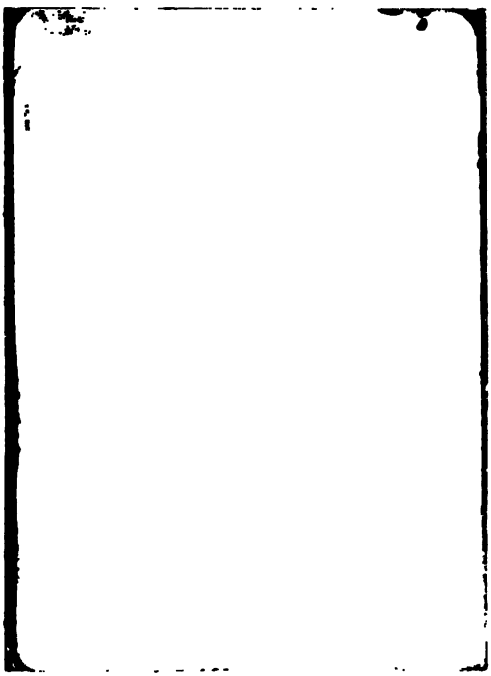
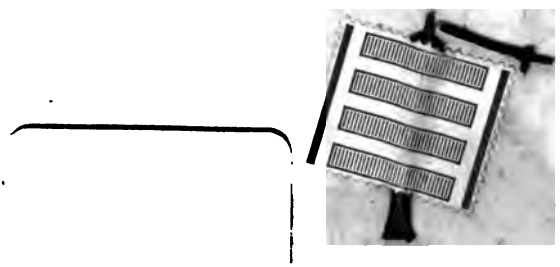
IN·MEMORY OF W·V

WILLIAM CANTON





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William Canton,
Annie Eliz[illegible] Canton
Guy Canton

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Phyllis Taylor

"Robin, [illegible] world [illegible]
And quite [illegible] till [illegible]."
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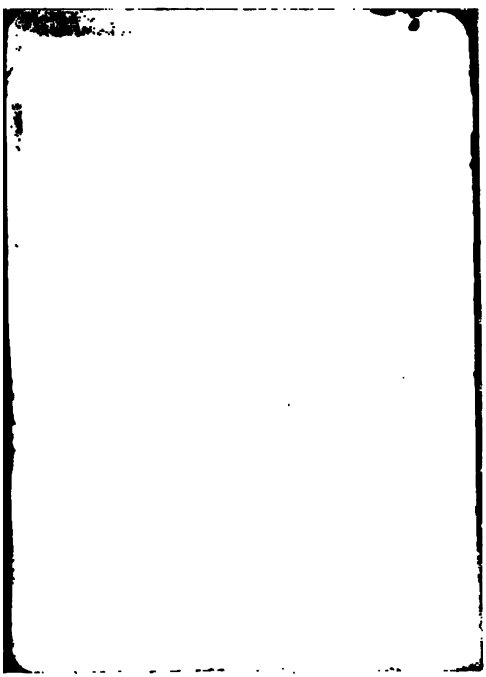

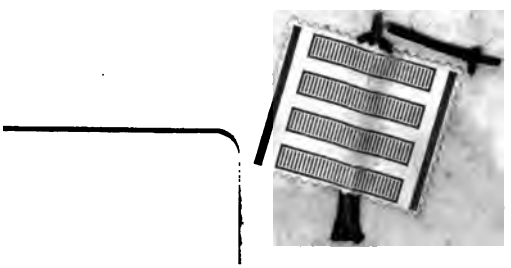

W. J. Hampton
Feb. 8th 19[illegible]

William Canton
Annie Eliz^th Canton
Guy Canton

Phyllis Taylor

"Robin, the world is all new!
And quite bright till the end."
[illegible]

In Memory of

W. V.

Winifred.
October 1900.

IN MEMORY
OF
W·V

WILLIAM CANTON
Author of "W.V., Her Book,"
"Child's Book of Saints,"
&c. &c.

LONDON
J. M. DENT & CO.
Aldine House, Bedford Street, W.C.
1901

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At the Ballantyne Press

I had no human fears;
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of early years.

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

This is He
Of Galilee,
Of Nazareth,
The Christ that conquers Death . . .
Talitha cumi! *See*
The tumult as of some sweet strife
Strained tremulous up—up—
"Give her to drink!" He saith—
Yea, Lord, behold, a cup!

Thy voice is on the rolling air;
I hear thee where the waters run;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
I have thee still, and I rejoice.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

WINIFRED VIDA

Glasgow, April 26, 1890. *Highgate, April* 15, 1901

THOUGH to her it is a vain service, I wish to leave a brief memorial of Winifred's little life, and so complete the book which has made her the child of many households besides our own. I undertake the task at the suggestion of one who loved her, though he never looked upon her face; and in writing of her I shall try to think of her, not as I last saw her, but as she was to me for nearly eleven years; as she will ever be in memory; as she *is;* as I shall yet see her, on the first day of the new week, when it is no longer dark, when the stone has been taken away.

When she came home for the Easter holidays, she was looking more healthy and rosy than we had seen her for a long time —full of gaiety and high spirits. She was so much a child of the earth, so completely one with spring flowers and new leaves and sunshine and the glad breath of the west wind, that one felt that while these lasted she could not but be as they were. Indeed, her joyous little soul seemed to give them something of its own immortality and a human nearness which of themselves they had not.

She had a reverence and piety of her own, thought much of the mystery of God and of the person of Christ, made her own quaint forms of worship—as when she added to her evening prayer the familiar petition, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore."

Yet in her many moods she was never a "heavenly" child. She wanted nothing better than the good earth on which she found herself. She was wonderfully alive to all that was beautiful; but when I once asked her whether she would not like to live in the sunset among the trees and little islands and tiny houses which she imagined (her meaning for "imagine" was, "I seem to see, although I don't quite"), she answered with a decided "No, I should not." And my question, "Why not?" was met with the prompt reply, "Because I am quite happy down here."

Other children, indeed, may have been as happy; none could have been happier. She had at times her childish troubles, but care fell from her easily. Life was so good to her—and so good to us through her. Even at the end, the wind of the Valley was tempered. She suffered little pain, and no

shadow of anxiety or misgiving disturbed her heart at any time. None of us thought of death, she least of all. It is a comfort to me to know that in the common sense of the word she did not *die*, but only swooned away through a momentary blank of darkness into the life divine. There was no leave-taking—no word of anguish or dereliction; no time or chance for these, the change was so sudden.

And yet to us now looking back, there was a sort of premonition in a curious phrase of hers on the evening before her death, when, a little light-headed, she said: "Oh, mother, we *shall* miss you if you go to Italy." On the following morning, too, she wandered at intervals, and I found her much troubled for a moment or two. "I don't want to marry the king's son; but you have to, if you find the king's ring." When I assured her that there was

really no compulsion at all, and that she should not marry any one unless she liked, she was greatly relieved, and looked up at me with a smile of perfect trust. That was the last time I saw the light in her living eyes.

Phyllis and Winifred came home on the Tuesday before Easter, and after a very happy holiday, in spite of the east wind and wet, were preparing to return on Monday, April 15th, the day on which she died.

On Saturday, the 6th, she went with Guy and me into the woods; and we talked and laughed over the "old times," before Guy was born, when she and I had adventures with the Oak-men, and went in great dread of bears and of the webs of the Iron Spider; and of later happy days when we used to take out Guy in his mail-cart, and tell stories in our country house while he

lay asleep under the shade of the tree which was his town house. That was the last time we three were in the woods together. She was always companionable, but now I found her grown into a kind of equal, without having lost any of her old gaiety and freshness of fancy.

The following Tuesday was beautifully bright and warm, and the children went into the woods in the afternoon, taking bananas, chocolate, and biscuits with them. They tied Phyllis to a tree, as Andromeda exposed to Pristrix the Sea-monster, and ran away and left her. Some boys came along, and offered Phyllis a knife to free herself "from her bonds," but she was not going to cut their skipping-rope; and presently Winifred peered round a tree laughing. She let Bertha release Phyllis, but ran off home herself, for fear they should chain *her* to the rock.

On Wednesday Phyllis, Winifred, and mother went to the British Museum, chiefly to see Cleopatra's mummy and the great tomb of Mausolus, with its huge stone chariot and horses. She was much interested in both of these things, for we had often talked of them, and these old stories had always a particular attraction for her. In the evening she was very anxious to go to church, but as the bells had stopped ringing before she got there, and she did not like to go in late, she came to meet me. I was crossing the road from the station when I heard a voice, "Father!" and Winnie came running towards me. A little later in the evening she complained of pain in the chest, which we thought was probably caused by indigestion; and she lay down and fell asleep.

On Thursday she still had a little pain, but the children amused themselves with

type-writing, and were very merry. After tea it was so bright that they took a run with their bicycles, but Winifred did not stay out long.

On Friday she did not care to go to the Hippodrome. As the pain had shifted somewhat lower and suggested gastric catarrh, the doctor was sent for; but she did not appear to be at all ill. Indeed, all day she was very lively, reading and playing with Guy, and working at some patchwork for a lucky-bag. The needle remains in it just as she left it. At night when Phyllis went to bed, Winifred sat up and said: "I feel better now; let's have a game!" but soon afterwards, hearing footsteps on the stairs, they dived under the bedclothes, and went to sleep.

About one o'clock in the morning she awoke her mother, and complained of the pain being worse. Hot fomentations and

poultices were applied; the doctor came early, and he diagnosed local peritonitis, with a temperature of 103. The word "peritonitis" did not then mean for us what it has come to mean since; we saw no cause for dread. There was pain, it is true, but it was not acute except when she tried to move, and with a little care, we thought, all would be well immediately. Late in the evening her temperature had risen to 105; but although she suffered from thirst and restlessness during the night, it had fallen to 102 in the morning, and it did not rise again.

I take what follows from her mother's account in our House-book:—

She wandered a good deal all day, which we attributed partly to the morphia she was taking, and she kept asking what day it was. When I said it was still Sunday, she laughed at herself quite in her old way, "I *am* a

donkey!" The doctor thought her certainly no worse when he came in the evening. She had a very restless night and talked a great deal. Nurse called me at four in the morning, and said she had just been very sick. After poulticing again, nurse went away for an hour, and I lay down beside Winifred, and held her hand and fanned her. She slept a little until six; then I poulticed her again, and nurse got up. Winifred looked very dark round the eyes, and her face was thin, but I never anticipated any danger. She was sick several times again; I think she counted the number, poor child. I helped nurse to wash and change her, and Will came up and helped too. We moved her to the other side of the bed, and she said she was so comfortable. She seemed to move more easily, and I thought she was a little better, but I could see she would need a great

deal of care and nursing. She brightened up when I said they should not go back to school, but that, when she got better, we should all go away to the seaside together.

She talked quite rationally about some things, though she wandered at times. Once she said "Shall I have to marry the king's eldest son? You know you must, if you find the king's signet-ring." I told Will, and he said, "Oh, you needn't, if you don't want to," which seemed to reassure her. She begged for ice, and Phyllis went and got some, and brought her some flowers, too, which she looked at. She complained of pain at the top of her head, and we kept putting on eau-de-cologne and ice and wet handkerchiefs. She threw the bedclothes off a good deal, and her hands felt cold.

The doctor came soon after 10.30. He found her temperature no higher and her body less tender, but her pulse was bad, and

he said she was very low, and proposed to send for advice. She began to speak indistinctly too, and yet I never thought of immediate danger. The doctor said he would come back about one. I sent a telegram to Will at once to say that a physician was coming, but almost immediately she began to change. Nurse felt her hands and found them cold and wet; "Oh, she is going!" she said. We gave her brandy, but her teeth were clenched and we could not get her to take it. I sent another message to Will; and nurse seeing the doctor's coachman, sent for him to come back at once.

I stood by her trying to realise that she was leaving me. Her eyes were wide open, all pupil, but quite unseeing. I kissed her, and spoke to her, but she never replied, and she just breathed a few times, and it was all over. The doctor came in a few minutes

afterwards. I think it must have been about 11.45; but I was too stunned to think of looking at the time. I went downstairs and told Phyllis, and waited for Will to come home. I was so cold.

So ends the story of the little life which to us was so dear.

Before I could reach home she had been dead for nearly two hours, yet her head and bosom were so strangely warm that it was impossible to surrender hope. It was not till late in the evening that the cold of the grave set in, and one knew for certain that her bright spirit had gone.

During the days that followed we kept the shadow from falling on Guy as much as we were able. He played and built and ran his trains as usual, and wound tunes out of his musical box; only, now and then he would ask: "Will it disturb Winnie?

Won't she hear?" And when he got for answer, "No, dear, but she would like it if she did," he would say: "It isn't too loud," and would go on very softly with his winding. Poor little man, no trouble, I think, fell to his share on her account.

But for us when she died all the clocks of the world seemed to stop, and all the wheels of life to fall still. It was strange to think how much we had to tell you, how many things we wanted to ask you, Winifred. Every trifle of hers became in a peculiar way precious—and so many things of ours became valueless. Books and pictures which I had kept for her when she should have grown older, what was the use or worth of them now that her hands should never touch them, her eyes never take pleasure in them? The natural impulse was to lay them beside her; she alone seemed to have any right

to them. How clearly one understood the sorrow of old days, when all sorts of treasures were laid in the dust with the dead. I used to suppose that this was done solely, or at least chiefly, with a thought of an after-life; now I knew that there was an earlier thought and a deeper emotion at work in the heart of the ancient people; they felt that the fitting place for these things was the grave.

One of Winifred's last visits was to an old clergyman who was ill and was not expected to recover, so very old was he. When he heard she was dead he tried to come and look for the last time on her innocent face, but he found he had not strength enough to get so far.

From almost as many strangers as friends came letters of sorrow and sympathy, and it chastened the selfishness of grief to learn

that of those who felt for us most deeply, several had had losses as grievous and nearly as recent as our own, and had suffered in silence, and at least without our knowledge and sympathy.

We laid her to rest in Highgate Cemetery on the 18th. Her little schoolfellows in Kent sent flowers, among them violets from her own garden; and on the Sunday they sang in church the Resurrection Morning hymn. Her old companions at the Kindergarten in Highgate also sent a wreath. In a small village in Norfolk, school-children she did not know searched the woods and fields for wild flowers for her grave; and other children, of whom she had only heard, sent moss and anemones from the shores of Coniston Lake.

At the funeral not only did the sun shine on the coffin, but in the grave itself there was light. All during the service, which

was conducted by her friend, Dr. Robertson Nicoll, a robin, I am told, sat close to the grave; she would have liked that. When I went up next day the bees were busy among her flowers, and that too would have been to her liking.

From our House-book I take this portrait of her, drawn more truthfully than I could have drawn it:—

She was very fair; her skin fine and clear and white; her hair fair and silky, and so fine that it did not appear abundant, though it really felt quite thick in the hand; her eyes large and blue—beautiful eyes, not so deep-set as Guy's, with long dark lashes; light eyebrows, and pretty nose, rather long; her mouth was not *quite* so pretty as it was when she was younger, her second teeth came imperfectly enamelled, a sign of delicacy, I sometimes think now, but

there was no other symptom that struck one in that way.

Her body was strong, broad-built; she had fine straight limbs, square-set feet, and extremely pretty hands and nails—("moons," she used to call the white at the root of the nails: "Does God like us to show our moons?")—I used to delight over her hands; she used them so gracefully too. Her flesh was firm and elastic to the touch, and she gave one the impression of having a good deal of muscular power. But she flagged easily; much walking or sustained exertion quickly tired her, and though when she was well she looked well, a very little illness made her look pale and wan.

To most people she was the embodiment of gaiety and high spirits, but to those who knew her well her pensive and sometimes melancholy moods were equally familiar.

Wherever she went she made friends; she seemed to know every one's name, and both in Highgate and at L—d everybody knew and had a greeting for Winifred.

And now her playthings are laid away, within sight and reach, but unused. No one touches the clubs with which she set out on her adventures. The vine has caught her hoop and twined it with tendrils and green leaves.

The rose-bush in the garden is breaking into flower at last. Blossom, slow bush, lift up hands of flowers, as she would say; the last time she was near you she blamed your long delay. In the woods, now that she can walk no more in the familiar footsteps, the ways are glad with the colour of spring. How she loved it! Here are the trees where there used to be pools after rain, and in her later years she

would look into them and laugh at her old fancies that there were water-fairies that lived down in those clear leafy depths. To-day all the pools are dried up, there has been no rain since she died. To me she was such a pool of fairy water—a ten-years' fountain of joy for ever springing. How well N—— prayed:—"We praise Thee for the years of good Thou hast given us!" How wise and helpful was his whole prayer—one unvarying and ungrudging hymn of praise and thanks for all, alike for the good and for that which does not seem good.

"We praise Thee!"

And yet for all that, how well I understand the misery of Othello's cry, "Othello's occupation's gone!" Constantly I find myself referring things to her—"This will do for Winifred; I must ask Winifred about that; Winifred must read this"—

and as constantly I am thrust back upon myself.

"'We praise Thee!"

Yet all the purpose, the brave plans, the high spirits, the zest of life have vanished. If I set myself to my tasks anew, it will be with the thought, "I shall go softly all my years."

Still, feeling this, knowing this, "We praise Thee!"

A week later, on what would have been her birthday, we went to Albury where all the woods and lanes are alive with her presence.

I knew that I should see her standing beside her bicycle in the shadow of the great beeches in the Warren; that I should see her waving her hand to me as she coasted down one of the broad drives along the Heath; that in one of the deep sandy lanes which lead to the Hurtwood,

where they played bare-footed, with rods of foxglove, at being Whortleberry Pilgrims, I should espy her resting in one of the "wayside chapels," formed half-way up the bank by the woven roots of the trees. Highgate she has left for ever; but in this still region of childish play and happy memories her joyous spirit, I felt, would linger with a lingering love of the sweet earth; and—who could say that it might not pass into a sudden visibility?—even as a little bright cloud startles the aeronaut by appearing suddenly at his side out of the clear air, and as suddenly departing into its unseen home.

And indeed, in the evening, I felt her presence with a deep sense of nearness. The sun had gone down, but the air was still clear, and the lark was still singing in the higher light; the thrushes, too, in bush and tree.

On the top of the Heath, in its little garden, the small white post-office stood out against the sombre green pines and beeches of the Warren, and around the post-office the garden looked like the garden of a vision, for a slender birch stood very tall and silvery, with light branches which seemed to float on the dim air, and behind there was a cloud of greenish-white plum-blossom, the two trees appearing as one.

All the garden was full of this dreamy bloom; and at one corner a faint smoke, with a tinge of rose in it, floated high above the blossom of plum and damson—this was the flower of the wild-cherry.

Far away, on the ridge of the downs, the little cruciform chapel of St. Martha stood cold and grey in a reach of cold clear sky.

The twilight deepened, the half-moon

high overhead grew bright, the garden on the Heath became more dreamily angelic. How easy it seemed to believe that if we waited a little we should see once more her light figure, in its well-known pink and dark blue, wheel past us with her nod and smile. Oh, Winifred, one last living look! Oh, child, one rose from your Paradise!

Recollections of her
Schooldays

RECOLLECTIONS OF HER SCHOOLDAYS

THE following recollections of Winifred were written a few weeks after her death by her cousin Phyllis. They cover the three months they were at school together at L—d, in 1901 :—

A week or two before we left L—d, Winifred and I dressed up and acted our Shakespearian play. The audience was composed of Uncle Frank, Aunt Hetty, and the maid, Minnie.

After the play, which went very well, we had some tableaux; they *were* good. Winifred was "The First-born" and "The

Little Match-seller." At least, Mingie* was the mother of the First-born; the First-born was my dolly. I was "The Sleeping Beauty" and "What's o'clock?" After the tableaux we sang, and the audience was immensely pleased. When we had finished, and were retiring (after we had come before the curtain, which was a screen) Uncle Frank asked if we weren't going to have a collection. So we said we would. And got threepence.

Our costumes for this great occasion were as follows:—

For "As You Like It," Winifred wore a flowing white robe composed of one of Auntie's best night-gowns: also a lovely variegated girdle, made of strips of the best paper, licked at the ends—the hue came off on to our tongues, and stuck together.

* Mingie and W. V. were only nicknames for Winifred (as Guy could not say Winnie he used to say Mingie); it means the same girl all along.

She also wore all the articles of jewellery she could find, and her party slippers. She had her hair put into a loose graceful knot, and braided becomingly. I was very much the same.

One night Auntie Hetty said we were not to talk after we got into bed. So, as we are *very* obedient children, we sat, after the light was put out, outside on the very edge of the bed, and talked for quite a long time. And Auntie could not scold us, for we had obeyed orders so well.

Every Sunday Winifred takes a class in Sunday-school. At least Miss N. is supposed to take it, but Winifred keeps order for her. When she calls the register, some of the boys say, "Yes, ma'am," and others say, "Yes, 'm." But sometimes they answer, "Present, teacher," which pleases her immensely.

Sometimes we play at "Scouting" in the

sand-hole during the dinner-hour. We played it like this. First Mingie would go round one side of a hill, and I round the other; we would both have our clubs and our top-boots, "to make us look more like men," said Winifred. (They are American boots made of rubber, and reaching to the knee; W. V. called them "seven-leaguers.") Then when we met at the foot of the hill, we would wrestle and the one that could overthrow the other first was pronounced victor. Then we would do it all over again. Somehow Winifred always seemed to get me down first.

One night I was having my bath before the fire, and Winifred was waiting for her turn, when she suddenly said, "Let us play at Nymphs!" So I was a Nymph in the sitz-bath, and W. V., garbed in nothing but two small towels, was "A Man," as she said. The Nymph had to try to hide in

the water, but I am unfortunately too large, and when my body was hidden, my legs dangled over into the fender; so it was a failure. But the Man laughed so that his towel fell off, and had to be readjusted. By this time, however, Auntie bustled the Nymph out of the Silent Lake, and proceeded to wash the Man, at which daring proceeding he was very indignant.

We two always slept together, and one night when we were unusually wakeful, we decided to make an alteration in our sleeping quarters. So, after much tugging and hauling, we managed to make the bed so that one of us should sleep at the foot and one at the head, and Auntie was vastly surprised when she could find only one of us at the head instead of two. We did it all in the dark, too.

Another night, when we were restless, instead of putting out the light, like good

children, I climbed (in my nighty) on to the chest of drawers, and was "Juliet," while W. V. was "Romeo," and serenaded me; and as it was cold, she stood on the hot-water bottle. All would have gone well if I had not fallen off the chest, taking the candlestick with me, and plunging the room into darkness as well as making a great clatter. Up came Auntie, and we went to bed in disgrace; but we had enjoyed it very much all the same.

Very nearly every evening Winifred and I skip in the playground. We fasten one end of the rope (the clothes-line) to the wall, and we take it in turns to turn the other end, while one of us skips till she is "out." We skip "Baker, baker"; this is it. The one who is skipping gets a big stone and runs in to the rope, and skips while a rhyme is said. When the rhyme comes to an end, some one says,

"One, two, three," and at "three," the skipper, still skipping, drops the stone. Then the rhyme, a little altered, is again said, and when "One, two, three" again comes, the skipper picks up the stone and goes on skipping. It is not at all easy to do, but both W. V. and I can do it. We have a great many more skipping games, but this is both the most difficult and the nicest.

Uncle Will sent us each a book. W.'s was "The Adventures of Baron Munchausen," and mine was "The Comedy of Errors." We were so pleased with them, and Uncle Frank spent the whole afternoon in reading them.

Every day we refresh our minds with a walk on the roof. If it is a fine day we stay out for quite a long while (if we have time), and hide there. One day, when I unsuspectingly walked out there, I heard a little click, and I looked round and saw

that naughty Winifred had cut off my only exit, by latching the bedroom window. In vain I shouted to her that the school-bell was ringing, and that she *must* let me in to get tidy; she only smiled, and brushed her hair; and not till the second bell was ringing did she let me in. I often tried to fasten *her* out; but no, she was too careful for that, and I never managed it.

Every Friday evening we have a grand clearing out of our bedroom. We take every ornament down, dust it and the place where it has been, and put it back again. We do all the room like this.

We like early Saturday morning better than any of the other mornings. That was because we were somehow allowed to stay in bed until 7.30, or past. We used to take the bedclothes and tie them to the four posts, and so make, by letting the sides hang right down for walls, a house with a

roof. We then would put all the pillows inside, and after that get in ourselves, and lie there until it became too hot; but generally before it had time to do so we were called to get up.

One afternoon we had a half-holiday, and we were taken to West M—g to do some shopping. I bought a little piano, some animals (imitation ones), and some chocolate. Winifred bought a dough-nut and some sweets, and I forget what else; but I know we were laden when we started to go home. Charlie went with us, and we had to help Auntie to get the mail-cart over the stiles.

Daddy wrote a tragic song, in which this verse occurred:—

'God's mercy,' cried the stricken knight,
And flung his sword far in the fight;
The din of battle swept away,
And on the trampled field he lay.

W. V. made a new version; it ran like this:—

'Oh, lummie!' cried the startled Kay,
And flung her twin-brooch in the fray;
The din of Phillipses rose around,
And the twin-brooch lay on the trampled ground.

Kay was my cousin Kathleen, and she was very fond of wearing twin-brooches, two brooches fastened together.

On my thirteenth birthday morning Winifred and I woke up unusually early; and when we heard the postman at the door we left our bed-making and raced downstairs. There were a great many parcels, eight in all, but that was only by the first post. We sat down on the floor and opened them all. All the presents were *lovely;* but Winifred was most taken with the watch. In the afternoon Auntie Hetty took Mingie to

M—e, and Winifred bought me a watch-stand, and Auntie a photo-frame. I had a birthday-cake for tea. We used to count up the days until it should be her birthday, but it seemed a very long time to us to wait, for it was practically two months.

Winifred had some very remarkable expressions, and about the funniest was one that she always used if I tickled her. It is hard to spell, and I think it is Scotch. It was "Dinna do't!" She pronounced it "Dinna doot"; and I may remark that it meant "Do not do it." Two of her favourite words were "wildly" and "slightly." If Uncle Frank was very angry, Winifred would say he was "slightly vexed"; or if he, or any one, came into the house slowly, she would say he was "coming wildly in." So that if Uncle was angry with her for doing something too slowly, she would say, "Uncle was slightly vexed when he saw

me wildly doing so and so." If you reversed it you got it right, but not unless. She used to come heavily downstairs, and thump about, which made Auntie Hetty vexed with her, for she said, "I don't want people to think that we have got a great heavy man in the house!" But Winifred used to quite forget all that, and come down just as noisily as before; and when again rebuked, she would say, with a look of mild surprise, "Why, Auntie darling, I was only thundering lightly down!"

The day that Winifred's mother and my father came to L—d for the concert, we were "wildly excited." We had a half-holiday in the afternoon, and I went with Aunt Hetty in the cab to meet them. While we were away, Winifred helped to put the stage up, in readiness for the concert at night. Auntie Annie brought Winifred a beautiful bunch of daffodils, and they

were put on the stage, to make it look nice. When we went into the concert we got front seats. Auntie Annie and Auntie Hetty played pianoforte duets, and Daddy sang. We enjoyed it very much.

The few days they spent with us were very fine, but alas! they went all too quickly, and before we knew it, Daddy and Auntie were on their way back to London. When Winifred and I were driving to the station with them at night, Winifred, looking up at the stars, said, "I don't know why people call those stars the Great Bear; they are no more like a bear than I am." I said, "Not so much!" And I *did* catch it when I was in bed. When they had gone the place felt *horrid* without them, and Winifred wept copiously (in bed), and I tried to comfort her, although I felt bad myself.

A few weeks before Aunt Hetty's birthday, Mingie and I heard her saying that she

wanted a new tea-cosy; so we saved up manfully. Between us we got 3s., all out of our pocket-money, and sent it to Manchester, and on the birthday there arrived a lovely tea-cosy. Auntie *was* pleased.

Just before we came home we went to M—e, to buy Easter eggs. Winifred and I each bought for everybody we wanted to, and then went and had some tea. After that Auntie did a lot of shopping; and when it was finished we discovered that we should have to wait an hour and a quarter for our train. It was pouring with rain, and all the shops were shutting up, as it was their closing afternoon. So we went home at last in the carrier's cart; and that was the best fun of all. We bought a nest with three eggs in it for Uncle Frank and Aunt Hetty. I gave little Charlie a basket-pipe with an egg in it. I forget what Mingie gave him—oh, I remember, it was an egg

with a pearl necklace in it. The egg was made of green wood.

[In connection with this ride in the carrier's cart, so briefly mentioned, we learned afterwards that the carrier was very much affected by the news of Winifred's death. The children had sat beside him as he drove, and they were much amused because he told them that no one had ever done so before but his "young lady." He had been only recently married, and he spoke a great deal about her to them.]

One day when Winifred and I had been having a slight "difference" over something, she said with a sigh, "My child, you are paving my way to an early grave," and that made us laugh, so that the difference was entirely forgotten. She often used to try to look pensive, and say either "My little child, you are turning my golden locks white," or "Oh, child, child, when you are my age you

will know better!" And when she had spoken we both used to laugh, so that Winifred could not look pensive any longer.

Her favourite game at night was describing dresses. Every, or nearly every, night I had to describe my wedding dress, my going-away dress, and my baby's dress, *at least;* then she would do the same. And if I dared to be sleepy, she would just kick all the things off poor me, and hold them off till I would "describe." I had no way of avenging myself, for she used to hold the clothes very tightly so that they would not come off. But one night I took a wet sponge into bed, and had my revenge!

I had a calendar given to me, and every morning I used to cross off a day, as one nearer to going home. There was always great excitement when we came to the end of a row.

She was very fond of getting flowers and making them into wreaths, and putting them on the graves in the churchyard opposite. I have known her decorate as many as five graves at once in this manner.

One or two of the schoolboys sometimes touched their caps to her, and then she *was* delighted. She would sail past them with a dignified air that was very imposing, but as soon as she was out of sight, she forgot her dignity, and burst out laughing.

Winifred was very fond of Geometry, and she always brightened up considerably when that lesson-day came. She was very good at it, and generally got ten-tenths. Indeed, she never went below eight-tenths.

There was a tumble-down kind of out-house not *very* far from us, that was called "The Black Lodge," because robbers were supposed to hide there, and to jump out at

people after dark. But though we often passed it at dusk, no one came and tried to kill us. Winifred *did* want to take her clubs and seven-leaguers and further disguise, and "lurk" there to spring out at unsuspecting village folk, get their wealth, and "fly." Of course, she agreed to share the "booty" with me, who was to stay at home so as to draw her up through the window with a rope. But she never got the chance to do it!

One morning I woke up very early, and as it was fine, I woke Winifred, and we put on our clothes, all but our frocks, with our jackets and caps. We then crept out in our bloomers and reefers as boys. We each got our (or uncle's) gardening tools, and gardened for quite a long time. Aunt Hetty *was* surprised when she could not find us in bed, later on. I was hungry before half-past six, and retired to seek

food. Winifred soon followed my example. But she, unlike me, did not care for dry bread, but had to grope for the butter, and during the proceeding upset the bread-mug, and came so near waking the household that we fled into the wood-lodge; but as nothing happened she came back, found her butter, and was happy.

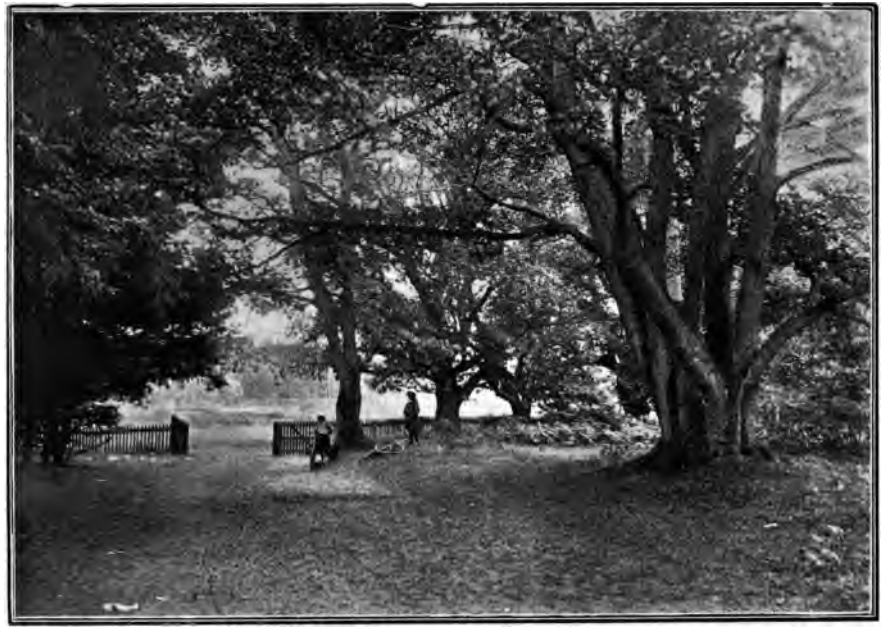
If ever in the evening, or in any part of the day, I, when I was alone, stayed out too long, Winifred would come to find me, and very stern she was when at length she found me. She would march me home (delivering a lecture as she did so), and give me some kind of punishment when she got me there. The punishment was generally making me do some sums.

One evening, wishing to be very helpful, she went and thoroughly dug up about two feet wide by two and a half feet long of an ugly bit of ground with no plants of any

kind on it. She dug it up well, and not till she had done nearly half of it, did she discover that she had "done for" a good part of the onion bed. Uncle Frank was "slightly vexed," and Mingie was sent to her room to write out fifty lines, but by the time she had written about half the number, Uncle told her she need not do any more. [So like Winifred to let her zeal outrun her discretion.]

On the evening of Sunday, April 14th (the day before she died), as I was fanning Winifred, she said, "Phyllis, everybody loves my choir-boy, don't they?" By her choir-boy she meant one in the church that she was always gazing at, and talked of, and called "hers."

She has often said to me that she would not like to be very old when she died. She would like to die young; *why*, she never said.



WINIFRED AND PHYLLIS IN THE WARREN, ALBURY HEATH.
July 1899.

Sunday, May 5, 1901.—Last night I had the strangest dream that I have ever had. I dreamed that it was early morning, and we were all in bed. I was awake, and suddenly Winifred came in through the window. Her face looked just as it did when she was well, but she was dressed in white, and she seemed to fly into the room. I know that she spoke to me, but all that I can remember her saying was that she liked being where she was.

When she had been in with me some time, she went to see her mother and her father; when she came out of their rooms she did not say anything more to me except that she would come again, or something like that,—I cannot quite remember; and then she went out of the window again, and when I woke up I felt like crying, for I *did* want to see her properly, and I was *so* disappointed to find out that it was only a dream.

I went to sleep again, and seemed to be shopping in a great crowd, who wanted to take my purse from me; but Winifred came, and took care of both me and my money, and somehow no one could touch me, and they were all making room for us, when Auntie said, "Wake up, Phyl!"

In the Golden Prime

IN THE GOLDEN PRIME

HERE in the autumn woods, while Guy is gathering acorns to plant a forest of his own, I sit and think of her; and somehow my memory goes back to our little story, "Beside a Summer Fire." Like the child of my fancy, she has vanished from the sun, gone far and far into the dusky paths of the long silence. I may call, and listen, and call again, but she never replies —never replies. Soon I too shall go, following you, Winifred, peering wistfully into the shadows, and holding my breath for the sound of your voice. Oh, some day—somewhere—beyond all doubting, we shall meet beside another fire, blithe and unquench-

able; and know each other, and remember with gladness, and not without tears, these old happy years of the earth.

Guy always walks with me in the woods; but it is only Guy—it is not She! Yet, dear little soul, what should I do without him?

In places where the tree-trunks are dappled with the low light, he "washes his hands with gold," and on the shining patches of the grass he puts his feet gleefully, for who would not be "The Boy with the Golden Shoes"? I can fancy I see her watching him—see the smile, half amused half motherly, and the silent motion of the humorous eyes with which she would have called my attention to him. How delighted would she have been, had she seen him pointing to the two rough-hewn benches they have placed beside the fountain: "Look at those bears, pappa; they are

growling at each other; their feet are stuck fast in the ground."

In his childish prattle he gives comfort that no one else can give me. . . . "Won't Winnie never come down again?" he asks. "No, dear." "No, we must die into heaven to her; and God will keep us there." If he misses her it is not sorrowfully, but with a quiet assurance: "I *would* like to see her. When I die into heaven I *shall* see her." "Yes, you will." "Yes, I will see her. I shall have plenty of toys to play with there; and flowers to pluck. The flowers never die there; they are always in warm summer air. Where does the cold come from down here?"

Dying into heaven! The old Keltic folk were wont to speak of "dying into the hills." A strange phrase it sounded, but a child's saying shows with what natural intuition they divined the way of our "hence-faring."

How these woods are haunted with the recollections of her!

Here among the hollows of the tumbled ground we gathered blue-bells in May—a lovely day, so warm and sweet with the scent of the spring that Winifred said she would tell her children about it, if (with a shrug) she had any. Out in the sunny fields beyond we once heard the crying of sheep, and when at her entreaty we went to look at them, there was no Boy Blue, as she had half expected, but an old rheumatic shepherd, with a face wrinkled and brown as a walnut. Under the trees in June we noticed how on the dappled ground the sunshine always came through the leaves in circles, no matter what the shape of the leaves or of the chinks between them; and in winter she found that the snow under these trees was spotted with tiny discs and cups of ice.

Dew for her was "fairy rain," and it was a delight to move a little this way and that so the sun might flash on the drops. If you shut your eyes and looked at the sun, you would see "tomato-red" through your eyelids. It was no use to point out that you could not look at the sun with your eyes shut; "you could pretend to look." On a morning in late October she discovered a benumbed butterfly, and held it tenderly till the warmth of her hand restored it, and it fluttered away.

She noted that in November the foliage on the eastern side of trees falls first; just as hoar-frost "blackens" first on the eastern side on a bright winter morning, while it shows so grey on the western side that the trees seem to be smoking. She was always curious in the observation of colour, but keenness for fact did not spoil her fancy. Long after she had lost faith in the Oak-men,

she suggested that "perhaps the swifts or martins carried the Oak-men away pick-a-back to the south: nicer than sleeping in the cold trees here all the winter." There was no capriciousness in regard to these things; she was invariably eager to watch and conjecture about them. "The ways of Mother Nature," was her phrase for them. "You don't understand Mother Nature, my dear," she once closed a lecture to Guy, when he got cross because it was raining; "she wants to water her plants and things."

It was pretty to watch these two at their play sometimes. "You nice, sweet huggy Winniline!" he would cry, unpacking his heart, and she would fold his head in her arms: "Oh, you little hero!" While she was at school he often talked of her, and picked up acorns, pebbles, bits of stick, any-

thing, that in his fanciful way he thought she might like to have when she came home: "I love Winnie; she does nice thoughts for me"—not only thinks them, but does them.

I have often been glad that she read the book from which she got her "little hero." It filled her world with such a sense of what was high and generous and gallant, with such dreams of beauty and splendour. Perseus and Danae, Theseus, Jason, Athenè, Chiron, the Argonauts—they were all so real to her. And how seriously she took them! "Oh no," she declared when it was a question of playing at the "Heroes," "I wouldn't be Theseus for anything, for after all his great deeds, there is a chapter which says, 'How Theseus fell by his pride.'" It was one of her regrets that she could not go to school to the Centaur: in heaven, perhaps, she might be allowed—"the Centaur would

not be in Hades, would he?" I do not know how she acquired some of her theological notions, unless indeed, piecing together the odds and ends of talk which children pick up with such startling alertness, she worked them out for herself in her untiring spirit of inquiry. Having read somewhere about what she called "Top-het," she asked whether "that pit of darkness and fire" were the same as Hades, and remarked: "There must be only very few people in Tophet; only those, I should think, who *won't* be sorry for what they have done."

"We are having quite a theóllojun for our son!" she laughed, when Guy hazarded a conjecture as to the divine intention in the making of trees; and it often happens that in children the theologian is twin-born with the poet. But whatever her childish speculations, she had a deep sense of right

and reverence. Ritual appealed strongly to her, and among the last things we talked of together were some forgotten customs of the Ages of Faith. Greatly did it please her to hear of the bells of mediæval cities chiming out the quarters, night and day, with a phrase of prayer—*Ut nobis parcas—Ut nobis indulgeas*—and marking the hour with the close of the petition, *Te rogamus audi nos!* Many a time as we came homewards through the woods at evening we sang together in an undertone a rhyme of ours which had taken her fancy, and which we called—

THE PASSING BELL

When our little day is ended,
When the dusk and dark have blended,
When the lights of time cease gleaming
O'er these tents of earthly dreaming,—
Te rogamus—

Do not in that hour forsake us;
Let not dust and darkness take us;
Send Thy dawn's clear splendour streaming
From the East of our redeeming,
Te rogamus!

But what did we not sing and say and play in the woods? Nonsense rhymes made up on the spur of the moment, poems I had learned when I was of her own age, verses she had picked up at school. There was "Cadet Rousselle," with his three houses, three hats, three coats, three eyes, and his rusty sword, and

Quand trois poules vont aux champs,
La première va devant,

and "Sur le pont d'Avignon," and "L'alouette" which was at once both French and English, of a kind:—

L'alouett', l'alouette monte en haut,
The lark runs up the heavenly stair,
Pour prier Dieu qu'il fasse chaud,
To pray God send it warm and fair
For three wee downy laverocklings,
Pour ses trois petits pâtureaux,
Who have not either cloaks or wings,
Qui n'ont ni ailes ni manteaux.

Her memory was remarkably quick and retentive, both for prose and verse, and she was constantly using phrases and allusions which showed how she assimilated what she read. "Hush, the naked bear will get thee!" she whispered in the words of Nokomis, when little Guy was in one of his moments of ululation. "Let us look at Tan; he is in his kennel; that's where he sits and sings his evening hymn." When I referred to a letter of hers as an "epistle," thinking she would not understand, "Oh," she broke in,

laughing, "I remember that Epistle of St. Winifred." "Oh, mother, you never let me come into your bed now. You know I would be as quiet and still as a deep lake." "My saucy son," from Norman Gale's "Bartholomew," was one of her names for Guy—

Bartholomew's
My saucy son:
No mother has
A sweeter one!

"The Songs for Little People" was one of her favourite books, though she found fault with the poet for "leaving words out" of Auntie Nell.

And then we cluster round her knees
To say our prayers,

ought to have been, "To say our morning prayers," and "To make us neat"—to make us "nice and neat."

She seemed to realise everything with a dramatic vivacity. When the "Ancient Mariner" was read to her she flopped down on the rug and lay bent and rigid against the bulwarks (of the couch) to show how the dead men cursed the Mariner with their glassy eyes, and when the albatross fell off and sank like lead into the sea, she uttered a prolonged O-o-h!—"I quite forgot about that whopping bird!" "Write when you get there," I said to nurse, as she was carrying Guy downstairs. "Wouldn't it be funny," cried Winifred, "if nurse wrote a letter for him,

Dear Pappa,
Dot dere,
BABY."

How one lingers over these foolish trifles! —but at the recollection of one of the slightest of these she comes back to me,

the bright, nimble-fancied, merry Winifred —and a Winifred still more close and dear. For, as though it were but yesterday, I remember an evening after a day of illness and pain, when it was very heaven to see the western light slanting into the cool depths of the wood, reddening the trunks and flushing the child's face, and darkening to a hot purple in the distant underwood.

And in the clasp of her hand there was healing. Winifred, "win-peace," "Peace the White." The meaning of names had an unfailing attraction for her; each new one set her questioning and wondering about the people who first bore them. Guy, "the leader"; William, "the helmet of resolution"; Elizabeth, "the worshipper of God"; Phyllis, "the green bough"; Winifred, "the white peace"—rather the Red Racket, I used to tease her—but how well I knew that she was my Win-peace too!

Her MS. books and school *cahiers* lie in a small pile before me, and I try to piece together some record for myself of the busy working, the dreams and projects, of her restless spirit.

How vividly this black-covered note-book recalls her first desperate struggles with arithmetic! Afterwards she acquired more concentration and perseverance in her attempts to master figures.

Here, too, are her collections of wild flowers—some of the flowers missing from their places, the others faded and shrivelled. They mostly belonged to June, '98, and bear their dates; some few were gathered in July, '99. Among the former I notice the "srynga," "marsh-mallow," "feather-few," "wild convolyulus" and "huny-ckukul," and that remembrancer of old romance, the "Plantagenet."

One page among the flowers shows, in a

sketch, the contrast between "stones before being washed by the sea" and "stones after being washed by the sea." As might have been expected, there are drawings, heads and figures, and among these a story begins:—"Once opun a tiome there was a little fay her name was cowslip a very pretty name too." . . . That story was never told.

She revelled in colour, and was constantly painting. Costumes, flowers, and decorative designs gave her most pleasure. Her favourite amusement beyond all others was to dress up as some historic or fairy-story personage. An old programme of some such performance, dated May 28, 1898, survives, and in a note-book of "Stories and Poems" belonging to the same year, I find what seems to be her first attempt at a play:—

ALFRED THE GREAT

SCENE.—*A moor with Alfred disclosed, as the curten rises, disgised as a pesent.*

ALFRED. To think that I am a king—no one would think it by my looks. Who knows when I shall get my kingdom restored to its proper rights? No doubt I shall never see the throne of England. And my troops, what will become of them? They will have to provide for themselves. I wish I could get something to eat and drink. Ah, I see some smoke coming from that clump of bushes; and the good woman must be preparing dinner for her husband, and I will ask for something to eat.

Curten.

SCENE.—*Alfred with a woman in a room in a cottage.*

WOMAN. Well, I sopose you can have something to eat. There is my husband

coming in to his dinner, and you can have some dinner with us. [*They eat.*

MAN. Well, travlar, play for us on your violin, come. [*Alfred plays.*

MAN. Thanks; come to bed now.

[*They go to bed.*

Curten.

SCENE.—*The same, with brekfast ready. They eat and talk.*

MAN. I must go to work now. Good-bye. [*He goes out.*

WOMAN. Will you watch these cakes while I go out.

ALFRED. Yes.

WOMAN. Well, mind they do not get burnt.

ALFRED. Very well. [*She goes out.*

ALFRED. Well, here we are alone again. I wonder where the Danes are—in Denmark or England? I hope the Danes will not get the crown. [*The cakes burn.*

Goodness gracus! the cakes have burnt. I am in hot water. [*The wife comes in.*

WOMAN. You good-for-nothing, all the cakes are burnt. [*The man comes in.*

MAN. King Alfred the Great, the good Saxon.

ALFRED. Yes, I am King Alfred.

WOMAN. Oh, sire, I beg your pardon, for we did not know you.

Curten.

A fragment of another play, "A Fairy Prince," opens with a gorgeous setting, and plunges at once into business.

PRINCESS. I dare say you would, and so would I; but I can't.

PRINCE. Why not?

In the "Two Good People," the Prince, who owns a magic ring, brings the Princess

Dotherinapon into his presence by its power, and proceeds to woo her:—"Adorable Princess, will you be my queen? for I have riches in abundance, and I am your equil." To which the Princess replies, "Prince, I would gladly marry you, but I have my father, who is a magician, and who has already given me to a man I hate." "Beloved Princess," cries the lover, "I can easily rid you of that torment. I have a wishing ring and I can do what I like with it. When you marry me, I will give you the ring as a marriage gift."

And so the effective, if somewhat unexpected, *Curten.*

Much attention is given to the theatrical wardrobe; in many cases the *costumière* has completed her task before the dramatist has been able to start on the text. Page after page is filled with her coloured drawings

of ladies' dresses, ladies' coats and skirts, children's hats, evening toilettes, and heads magnificent with feathers, jewels, and other gorgeous accessories.

The last of her dramatic efforts is preceded by the note :—

"1900, April 28. First fern up."

It is entitled—

THE GARDEN OF ROSES.

CHARACTERS—*Princes. Princesses* (2). *Fairies* (4). *Witch.*

SCENE.—*A little wood. A little girl is asleep. Circle of fairies swaying backwards and forwards singing.*

FAYS' SONG.

Little mortal, hushaby!
While we sing in the woods;

Though the mortals are forgetful
We will guard thee here in peace.

Chorus.

Come to the garden of roses,
Come where the roses grow,
Where we fairies dance for ever
All among the roses.

Enter WITCH.

WITCH. So you have got a princess. Now I will give you each a wish—and I will have one too.

FIRST FAIRY. I give her buty.

SECOND FAIRY. I give her happiness.

THIRD FAIRY. I give her riches.

FOURTH FAIRY. I give her noble marrige.

WITCH. And I give her some sorrow.

Curten.

Following this unfinished play there are

openings of two stories, that of "The Sweet Princess," who was shut up in a great grey castle, and that of "Princess Rosa," who was dressed in pearl-grey satin, and wore round her neck "thirteen strings of large pearls, rubies, emeralds, diamonds, christals, sapphiers, and amerthists."

So many beginnings! So many things to do, so many things left undone in her little busy eager life!

I pass over in silence the various things she wrote in ordinary prose, as I cannot be sure how far she was merely reproducing what she had read. There are sketches and tales —"Dorothy," "Tommy," "The Fairy House," "The Magic Wande," "The Rose Maid," "The Spoilt Princess," "The Puff-puff and the Gee-gee," and so on—finished, unfinished, barely begun, and all distinguished by a cheery indifference to or-

thography which gives them a certain transatlantic—or shall I say mediæval?—piquancy. Here, however, is a happy ending:—

"But one day the Princess was in her little chapel praying, with her white hands clasped togather, and her golden hair reaching down to the ground, and clad in a dress shinning like the sun. A man came in, and with a cry of joy the Princess rushed into his armes and sobbed opon his sholder. 'My darling,' said the King, 'you must come with me home to my own land.' So they started, and when they arrived the Princess fainted. . . . 'Oh, were am I?' said the Princess; for comeing counches (conscious) again, she was in a pink silk bed and blue curtains, and the King was be side her, holding her hand. 'My treasure,' said the King, 'you are with your dear one.' The Princess fell into his arms, and the King

pressed a kiss on her pretty cheek. They were soon marrèd, and ended their days in joy."

Turning to her diaries I find the following, under date February 1, 1899:—

I saw a little rain-drop sitting on a blade of grass,
and I took that little rain-drop and I made him a home.
And that pretty little rain-drop came to be my friend.

To the June of this year belongs a "Book of Laws and Rules," drawn up by Phyllis and herself for the observance of "the Court of Queen Titania" during the holidays, which we spent on the edge of Albury Heath. It is an extremely rigorous code, but the provisions had been framed with much deliberation, and had received the approval of all the estates of the realm—

witness their signatures: Count Randolph, Sir Edmund Greysteel, Prince Ralph, Wildrose Stevenson, Prince Max, Sir George Eliot, and the worthy commoners John Gumtree, Speedwell, Charles Krong (a foreigner?), and Arthur White Gregson.

On the 7th August she records her earliest recollections :—

"The first thing I remember is myself sitting on my father's knee, dressed in a pale blue dress, a white pinafore, and a pale blue sash, and my mother coming down the road, at Glasgow. And I remember a white statue, and father says it was the Venus of Milo, and it stood in the corner of the room."

As she was not more than thirteen months old when we left Glasgow, it is much more likely that this is a recollection of things heard long afterwards than of things actually seen.

"The second thing I remember is—

Mother had dressed me to go out, and I went into the garden to wait for her, and there was a railing, and one end of it was tarry, and I got some tar on my fingers and rubbed it down my dress, and mother put some butter on it to take the stain out."

At that time she would be a little over three.

These recollections are followed by what seems to be a Latin exercise—"Agna saltat in prato . . . Canis vexat taurum . . . Cornua demittit taurus," and so on.

In the beginning of 1900 she notes—"I read in December 'Wyemarke and the Sea-fairies,' by Edward H. Coupar. I learnt at school in 1899 'The Rhyme of the King and the Rose,' by Elsie Hill, and 'The Inchcape Rock,' by Robert Southey."

She also knew by heart "The Revenge," by Tennyson, "Oriana," Longfellow's "King Robert of Sicily" and the "Monk Felix," "Sir Galahad," Kingsley's "pleasant Isle of

Aves," and a number of other pieces in English and French which I cannot at this moment recall. It was no trouble to her to learn; things lodged in her memory of their own accord.

The verses which I now give were written at various times during the year.

POETRY.

The robins all have flown away,
The spring is coming bright and gay,
The grass is green, the sky is blue,
And that's why I like spring—Don't you?

THE SEASONS.

The winter's gone, the spring is here,
And budding is the lime,
And up the sunlit old brick wall
The jessimen doth climb.

The spring is gone, the summer's here,
The rose is on the wall;
There's marjoram, there's featherfew,
And silver lilies tall.

The summer's gone, the autumn's here,
The leaves are red and gold;
And with its clouds and autumn sun
The year is growing old.

The autumn's gone, the winter's come,
The close of all the year,
And with the Christmas snow and frost
The Christmas chimes ring clear.

IN SUMMER.

Oh, sunlit sky,
Oh, happy hours,
I love the wind,
I adore the flowers.

It is so sweet
To see them grow,
Like heaven above
Is earth below.
The leaves are green,
Blue are the flowers,
Oh, sunlit sky,
Oh, happy hours!

THE BLACKBIRD.

On a merry May morning a blackbird sits
High up in the tree-top green,
He sings a song so sweet, so clear,
All over the world he has been.

Hurrah! cries the blackbird, and sings a note,
Hurrah! pipes the sparrow with feathers grey,
Be glad, ye people of earth so brown,
This is a gladsome day!

*Hurrah! next month comes the swallow white,**
In June the roses sway,
A merrier month is not to be found—
This is the month of May!

THE SUMMER.

The summer is coming,
The birds are all singing,
The winter is over,
And soon comes the clover.
With lillies and roses
The children make posies.
The breases are soft,
And the birds sing aloft.

Here, too, there are numerous beginnings which have a certain pitifulness about them.

* The white swallow is, I suppose, the martin, with its white breast and its white leg and feet feathers.

IN INDIA.

The babes are sitting on the grass,
The Indians go to their morning Mass;
I wish I were an Indian boy. . . .

The cherry-tree is bare of fruit,
The leaves are off it now. . . .

The sun was sinking in the sky,
I watched the little clouds on high,
And as I watched the moon came out. . . .

When all the land is frozen o'er
With snow so thick and deep,
Jack Frost comes round with an icy touch
While Mother Nature's fast asleep. . . .

During the holidays, which we again spent among the woods and flowery lanes of Albury, Winifred and her cousin edited

and "published" a magazine. As Phyllis was the sub-editor, the lion's share of the work fell naturally to her, but I am assured the profits were divided with a scrupulous rectitude by the editor. The opening article by the sub-editor describes some of their amusements:—

"One day we were Princesses, and wrote letters to imaginary Princes, and posted them in a hollow tree, and went day by day to see if there were any answers; but we only found our own yesterday's notes. So we sadly threw them away, and put in the fresh ones."

Winifred mentions another incident:—

"One afternoon Phyllis was in the garden. Suddenly she saw the cat with a little bird in its mouth. She ran forward and called me and the maid, and between us we managed to get the bird away, but it was dead. Phyllis and I then got a little

white and silver box, and we dug a little grave in the heather, and we buried the bird with great mourning, and we decorated the grave with white flowers, and sang cheerful songs over it."

Curiously enough she omits to mention that they pretended that the dead bird was the Fairy Queen, and that they proposed to Guy to join them in pricking their fingers and shedding blood on the grave. Guy sturdily refused to abet such paganism, just as he refused to play the troublesome part of Faithful, though he was prepared to eat oranges as a humble pilgrim, worn with long wayfaring.

On the 10th January 1901, Winifred began a diary, which she kept to the end of the term. It is perfunctory, but the entries are regularly made, and here and there they are personal.

January 21.—*Monday.*—I learnt a verse of "Sir Galahad." The Queen is eighty-one now, so she is rather old to recover.

January 22.—*Tuesday.*—The Queen is dead. Long live the King.

THE QUEEN.

She is dead, our beloved one,
Our good and great Queen;
She was loved by all nations,
Her life was serene.

W. V. C.

January 23.—*Wednesday.*—I got four sums right this morning.

January 25.—*Friday.*—I had five sums right this morning.

January 28.—*Monday.*—We had Scripture this morning, about Hezekiah. I had two sums right this morning. We had recitation, "The Revenge" (Tennyson).

January 30.—*Wednesday.*—We had a half-holiday to-day because they have been changing classes. Phyl and I made a cake all by ourselves. I had four sums right to-day.

January 31.—*Thursday.*—We had geometry this afternoon. I got ten-tenths and an enormous "Right." We have each bought a white china plate, and we have been each painting little girls on them.

February 9.—*Saturday.*—We have been having an exam. I got 19 and Phyl got 20. We have been pretending to be princesses; I am Betty, Phil is Edith.

February 13.—*Wednesday.*—We had model drawing. I got seven, and Phyl got seven.

February 26.—*Tuesday.*—I got 9 in drawing. It is cold. Uncle Frank is going to get us a French book, if he can; but I hope he can't.

March 8.—*Friday.*—We had a lesson on recurring decimals.

March 16.—*Saturday.*—We helped with cooking this morning. This afternoon I skipped with Phyl and May H——.

March 21.—*Thursday.*—The tide is right up New H——e and flooded the road. I have got chilblains, and am going to retire to bed with goose-grease.

On the following day she was not allowed to get up, and amused herself by making her will, which cannot now be found.

As a rule there is very little of Winifred in her letters. She was too impatient to say well or to say at any length what she would have spoken with pleasure. Spelling, too, was a great burden to her. On occasion, however, she filled in the details, as in the following :—

September 30, 1900.—Yesterday I went blackberry-picking with Jane P——, Grace

and Cecil R——, and Charles (in his pram).

Yesterday a little gipsy baby was buried, and I made a wreath for it. It had such a pretty little coffin, white and silver. My wreath was of Christmas daisies and red leaves. The leaves are lovely just now, crimson.

I rode my bicycle yesterday.

I enclose one of the autam leaves. . . . I must stop, so good-bye from your very unhomesick daughter, Winifred.

[Phyllis has already referred to the pleasure Winifred took in laying flowers on neglected graves. I do not know what thought it was that stirred her to these acts of pity towards the dead, but it was a trait very natural to her. I remember, when long ago we went across the Heath to visit the tumulus of Boadicea, how anxious she was to know whether there was "a wreath on that dead

queen's grave." "Not any leaves either?" Then, when she had heard that all who knew her had died long ago, and even the pine-trees that had waved over her had died too, "We might have taken some flowers." She was not much more than six then.]

October 26, 1900.—I am sending a little poem for a birthday surprise. . . . I could not think of anything but a poem for your birthday, and Auntie suggested that a letter and a poem would be the nicest thing. So I send both. I wish I could see you all, but it will not be long before I do so.

THE BLUE BIRD.

A merry Blue Bird sat on a green bough,
Whispering then, and whispering now,
He said to his little blue son, 'Beware!
The cruel grey Cat is there—look there!'

'Ha! ha!' cried Puss, 'there a Blue Bird sits;
He will make an excellent meal for my Kits!'
And down she pounced on the Blue Bird fair,
And the Blue Bird's soul went up through the air.

October 31, 1900.— . . . You promised to give me 3d. for a good "pome," and 1d. for a "good, bad, or indifferent" one. I will try and send you a nice one to-day, though really I don't know whatever to write about.

February 24, 1901.— . . . I am at last sending you a poem. I am afraid it is not very nice. . . . We have bought another dormouse, and called it Dorcas. It is so pretty. Phyllis encloses a poem. I hope they are worth something. . . . Your loving little girl, WINIFRED.

× × × × × × × × × × by 1000000000000000000.

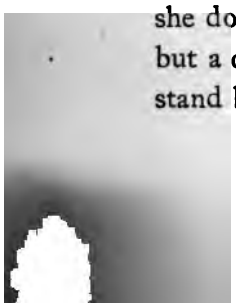
WINTER.

In the flickering warm bright firelight
I sat when all was dark,
And as I looked on the blackness
I saw the thick snow in the park.
I saw the red lights in the village,
I saw the stars shining bright,
I saw the dark fir-trees swinging,
And below all the snow was white.

Her last letter was written on the typewriter (used for the first time) on April 11, four days before her death. In it she says:—"We went to the British Museum yesterday. We saw the mummy of Cleopatra. . . . It was a horrid day here this morning, but it is quite nice now. Perhaps Uncle Charlie is going to take Phyllis and me to the Hippodrome to-morrow. It is aggravating that the holidays are nearly over."

Among her papers there are many little notes written to imaginary persons, chiefly people she had read of in stories. In her Birthday Book, too, she entered not only the names of her friends, but of two characters in the novels of Marion Crawford, whose works she was very fond of, and other imaginary people. In many instances she has evidently been too much in a hurry to wait till the ink dried before closing the book. So like our little whirlwind! Under her name on the fly-leaf she has inscribed, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke vi. 1).

At Albury the sense of her unseen presence was so acute that longing unsatisfied became a torture. Here at Hambledon there is no presence, no companionship; she does not come at all. There it seemed but a question of time as to when she would stand before me, living and unchanged; here



in my heart of hearts I know that this will not happen. And yet—in spite of knowledge—as I sit at sun-down on the edge of the high pine-wood and look over the long green levels below me, the lines of "Kilmeny" rise unbidden in my memory, as though they were half a supplication, half a promise:—

When many a day had come and fled,
When grief grew calm, and hope was dead,
Late, late in a gloamin when all was still,
When the fringe was red on the westlin hill,
The wood was sere, the moon i' the wane,
The reek o' the cot hung over the plain,
Like a little wee cloud in the world its lane,
When the ingle lowed with an eiry leme,—
Late, late in the gloamin, Kilmeny came hame.

The red light dies on the hill, cottage windows glimmer far down in the dusk, the air blows cold; but she does not come

home. It may be that in our hours of waking we are not fitted for intercourse with those of our love who have passed from this light; but I know that when it sleeps the mind is "bright with eyes." I shall sleep, and in sleep surely it will be given to me to see her, as I saw one taken more rathe in old days of loss. And as sorrow fell from me then, so will it now drop away from me; and I shall be glad that I am alive, and not unhappy, Winifred, that you are dead.

WINIFRED.
October 1900.

OUR STORIES

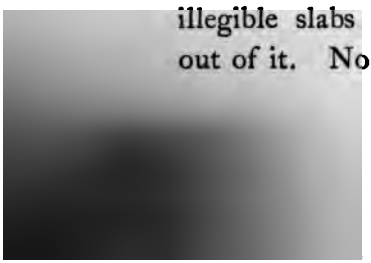
Winifred's personality, her doings and sayings, count for so much in the following sketches and stories, that these pages would by their omission be rendered still more imperfect than they are.

BESIDE A SUMMER FIRE

One of our favourite haunts is the old quarry.

Though it is scarcely half a mile from the village it is among the loneliest places in the world. It is one of the greenest too, and one of the stillest, for no sound seems to reach it, except it may be, the song of a lark overhead, or the noise of the shallow brook across which we have to pick our way to enter it.

Nobody can tell me when it was last worked, or why it was abandoned. I suppose some of the older houses were built from its red sandstone; perhaps some of the illegible slabs in the graveyard were hewn out of it. No one can say.



Up in the fields above, a fence runs along the brink to keep the cattle and sheep from falling over. Around it there are rowans, larches, hazels, bushes covered with dog-roses in June; and the grass has grown thick over the litter of chipped stone, and lichens have tinged with curious colours the big blocks which were ready for lifting but were never carted away.

In the face of the perpendicular rock there is a hole which looks like a cavern that might lead into the heart of the hill, but we have never ventured to explore it. It is too uncanny, too menaceful. One of us is too old, one is too young to be so recklessly adventurous.

We are content to gather dead wood and light a fire beneath one of the larches. We watch the smoke curl up in blue wavering puffs and wreaths, and we sit beside our wild summer hearth, and spread our lunch

—venison from the King's vert, we pretend, which we have brought down at the peril of losing our right hands, so barbarous are the laws of the forest.

How is it that we both take such delight in a handful of fire under a tree in a blazing summer day?

As I lie and listen to my companion's merry chatter I wonder at the curious feeling of contentment, of freedom, of romance which I experience. Then I endeavour to account for it, but I find myself baffled by the prosaic common-sense which I presume must accompany all our grown-up attempts at reasoning. I ask my companion to explain. She, who is so young yet, so much nearer to Nature and the Ancestors, ought to be able to give some intelligible account of the matter. I can see by her smile that she knows, but it becomes manifest that she cannot find words for things so elusive. I

do make out, however, that she thinks we ought really always to live like this—under the blue, in the clear sunny air or in the clear shadow of trees. It is nicer than a house, it is the real house; a house is a sort of clay modelling of this larger home —good enough in winter, but a very inferior imitation when it is warm and one has no Kindergarten to attend.

Then fire is a most beautiful creature; "more wonderful really than dog-roses," though they, too, look like a kind of fairy fire. Still it is not solely the beauty of the fire which delights us. It appears rather to be its companionableness. "Lightning is quarrelsome; but fire is friendly," she thinks. I imagine she is right. Through long centuries men and fire have been house-mates, and mates when there was never a house.

Can this be really the clue to the mystery

—that for ages and ages, beginning far away back in the houseless nights and skin-clad days of the ancient life, our ancestors have loved the cheerful face of fire; that the antique joyous association of burning wood with the savage woodland was so long a habit that the civilisation of our historic centuries has been unable to obliterate it completely?

I can scarcely resist the conclusion that it is so. I remember the desert islands of my boyhood, and I know it was not merely a wish to put into action the books of adventure I had read which made me a little savage who caked his hair into a spire with clay from the river. At any rate it is no desire to play at pirates and outlaws which thrills me to-day with the dreadful atavistic joy in a tramp's fire and free life under the greenwood tree. No, we are the children of the Ancestors, and their blood in us beats

true to the old forest paths and the laws of the wilderness.

As we idle by the dull embers and white ashes my companion asks for a story.

Well, does she know where the Fens are?

Why, yes; and they were drained long ago.

Just so. Well, once upon a time there was a savage hunter who came with his little girl up the river in a canoe hollowed out of a tree, and paddled to a little piece of beach on the edge of the forest; for in those days there were no Fens, but there was a mighty forest of great oaks and firs and alder and birch and willows. And they landed and drew up the canoe, and they gathered sticks and dead leaves and lit a fire, just as we had done.

And the little girl went away in among the trees to look for berries and wild fruit,

and the father piled more wood on the fire.

And when the little girl had been away a long while, and the father heard no crackling of dry branches or rustling of bushes, he called to her, but she did not answer. He grew uneasy, and went into the forest to seek her, and kept calling and calling, but she never replied.

So he went deeper and deeper into the wilderness of great oaks and firs, and continued to call her name till the sound of his voice died away.

And the fire beside the canoe smouldered, and then went out, with only half the wood burnt.

And the forest grew older and older and older; and the great trees decayed and fell down with age, one by one, till nearly all the forest was dead; and storms tore up the other trees; and water lodged among the

fallen trunks; and reeds and marsh plants matted them together, till great peat bogs covered the country many feet deep.

Then the sea broke in and flowed over the bogs, for the land sank down; and sand and shells and sea-weed were drifted together in thick sheets.

And all this took hundreds and hundreds of years to happen.

And at last when the sand and sea-warp grew high enough, the country became the Fenland, and the Romans, when *they* conquered Britain, made a roadway across it with trunks of trees and a bed of gravel, and that was fifteen hundred years ago.

"True?"

Why, yes.

How did I know?

Because not long ago when people were digging in the Fens they found the canoe,

and the wood piled for the fire and the burnt embers in the middle of it.

And the little girl?

Well, she wandered into the forest and her father went to seek her.

And hundreds and hundreds of years went by.

And they never came back?

Not to the Fenland. But she wandered on and on till she came to an old quarry, and there she lit a fire, and when she had done she turned round, and there was her father sitting beside it.

W. V. laughed incredulously: "Father, you said it was true!"

CHIMNEY FLOWERS

On a wild night three winters ago the wind Euroclydon tore it from the chimney top, and sent it clattering down the slates. It plunged like a Bulwan shell into a huge laurel bush in the garden, and there W. V. and I found it in the morning, unbroken, in a litter of snow and shredded branches.

Neither in shape nor in colour was it a pretty specimen of the potter's craft; but it *had been* clay, and all clay appeals to humanity. As I looked at it, it seemed to deserve a better fate than the dustman's cart, so, to Winifred's great delight, I dug a hole for it in one of the flower-beds that catch a little of the sun, set it on

end, and filled it with stones and soil, in which something might be planted.

This is Nature's way; when she lets her volcanic fires smoulder to ashes she lays out the crater in grass and wild flowers. And this appeared to be the proper way of treating this old retainer which had served so staunchly on the ridge of the roof; which had never plagued us with smoke, whatever the wind or the weather.

We were puzzled what to plant till I recollected London Pride, which, I pointed out to Winifred, is a true roof flower. You find it, no doubt, in gardens little above sea level, but in Kerry, in Spain, its natural place is on the roof of the hills. An "ice-plant," the country people call it, I believe; and that too was appropriate to the hollow of the cylinder through which no fire would ever again send its familiar smoke.

Wherefore we planted London Pride in the old chimney-pot, and masked its plainness with ferns.

To-day the feathery fronds hide all but the thick blackened rim; behind it a rose-bush, trained against the dark paling, shows four crimson buds; in the crater itself the space is filled with green rosettes, and a score of stalks send up stars of pink-and-white blossom.

As I pass by in my walk I think of all the comfortable fires that have burned on the hearth beneath it; of the murmur of pleasant talk, of the laughter of children; of the sound of music and singing, of the fragrance of tobacco, that have floated up to it and through it on the current of warm air. In a way it has shared our joy and our sorrow, our merriment and our cares, and it, too, can thrill with "the sense of tears in human things."

I recall especially one March night. The rain from the roof is splashing from the gorged gutters; all are in bed save a restless four-months child—"the Fretful Porcupine," W. V. flippantly calls him—who is asleep in his cradle in a shadow of the room. His little socks are on the fender. About midnight he will awake and cry for food, and I shall take him upstairs. Meanwhile I read and write. Raindrops fall and hiss on the glowing coal.

How long ago it seems!

The other day I saw a blackbird light on the rim of the chimney-pot, and make a dab with his yellow beak among the rosettes. In the old time, on the roof, sparrows used to alight there, possibly for the sake of the warmth; so I am glad the blackbird came.

I wonder, in an absurd way, whether it misses the wreaths of homely smoke. Per-

haps it has forgotten them—it is the nature of clay to forget easily; perhaps it remembers, but is reconciled, feeling dimly (as I do) that flower and leaf are only another and less fleeting form of the old-time smoke and flame and warmth—are indeed the original form, the beautiful form which they wore in the far-off days when the coal murmured and tossed in the green forests which murmured and tossed in the sunshine.

A PRISONER OF WAR

THERE were silvery summer clouds floating in a vision of blessed peace in the blue depths; the wind in the limes and rowans was wafting an elfin summons to me to return "The World as Will and Idea" to its place on the shelf, and to come out and enjoy the world as a shining reality; the swifts were diving and wheeling to and fro with shrieks of delight that life was so good to live; a big, velvety bumble-bee was droning, with sudden stoppages and intervals of busy silence, about the white stars of the clematis and the cream roses which muffled the gable wall. I read on stoically, and might have finished Book III. but for the sound of childish merriment in the garden.

I went to the window and looked out, unobserved.

A rosy little maid of seven was playing at shuttle-cock on the lawn. By the edge of a flower-bed, in the shadow of the rowans, her mother was leaning back in a garden chair. Beside the chair on a rug spread over the grass a chubby nine-months boy sat working his plump little body backwards and forwards in a ceaseless rhythm of eager, ineffectual activity.

"The planetary babe," some one had called him, seeing that the only kind of motion he had acquired was a revolution on his own axis; and looking down with fond pride at the radiant little soul, his mother, I think, was not ill-pleased.

The little girl soon tired of her solitary game. Dropping the racket on her mother's lap, she threw herself down on the rug, and catching the planetary babe by the hands,

began to sing the rhyme of "See-saw, Margery Daw."

Mother took up the racket, and looked dreamily through the square meshes of the network at the summer clouds. As she looked a happy thought struck her. The racket was a prison window, she said aloud; and gazing through the iron bars she could see the green fields and pleasant woods, with the sun shining on them.

The little girl paused in her rhyme, held the babe's hands, and listened.

Yes, she could see the swifts flying joyously up and down, and in the fields there were flowers growing; and only a hundred yards away there was a little boy and a little girl playing. How happy they must be out in the sweet air and the warm sunshine! If they only knew that she was there in a dark dungeon, with chains on her feet and hands,

perhaps they would gather some flowers and give them to her.

The little girl sprang to her feet, and hurried round the garden plucking pansies and marigolds and spires of blue veronica. Returning, she put them into the babe's hands, raised him on to his unsteady feet, and lifted him up to the dolorous prison window.

"Give them to the poor man inside, baby. He is a poor old prisoner of war, and cannot get out."

Through the loophole in the dungeon wall an emaciated hand took the flowers, and a pitiful voice thanked the children for their kindness.

Then W. V., sitting down on the rug and settling the babe on her lap, looked up eagerly at the face behind the iron bars: "Say it again, mother!"

A RED-LETTER DAY

My Red-Letter Day began with a cry of a cuckoo, a glitter of dewy leaves tossing under my window, a fragrance of flowers and wood-fires, and a wild chant of jubilee. Guy Greatheart was lifting up his voice in the garden in one of his mystic songs without words.

A few minutes later I saw him under the white rosettes of the syringa. He had provided himself with a couple of pebbles, and was swinging from one foot to the other as he sang; then he walked round thrice in a ring, clashing his stone cymbals, and finally resumed his musical rocking from foot to foot. Surely some antique ancestor who worshipped the Sun with quaint

dance and barbaric minstrelsy thirty centuries ago, must have at last wakened up in Guy.

And, now that I think of it, this may account for the interest and even awe with which he listens to any reference to the Laws of the Medes and Persians. When every other appeal to his sense of duty and propriety has been exhausted, when he stands stolid and breathing heavily, with eyes cast down, or sits roaring in his chair, "Wants his own way! Wants his own way!" a rhyme from that memorable code generally acts like a spell, and he gives in with a "Wipe eyes, mamma!"—whether there be tears or not.

I fear, however, that neither Winifred nor her cousin Phyllis has the same reverence for the beautiful examples of conduct recorded in those ancient laws. The other day, after hearing that—

The Medes and Persians did not dream
Of doing such a thing as scream;

and

The Medes and Persians always did
Religiously what they were bid;

and

The Medes and Persians thought it rude
To play at table with their food;

Winifred rejoined—

English children never can
Be like Mede or Per-si-an;

and Phyllis abetted her by laughing hilariously.

Immediately after breakfast we started for a long day in the Hurtwood. Under the cool awning of his mail-cart, Guy Greatheart took charge of the string bag and basket which contained the locusts and wild honey of our wayfaring. Mother and the

"chawldren," as he calls Winifred and his cousin, went briskly on before with their long hazel staffs, and I brought up the rear, for mail-carts have a fashion of loitering behind when left to themselves.

Now there are many ways of reaching the Hurtwood, but the properest is through the Two Tree Field and the Emerald Door. You turn by the mill-pool—and on this day of all days the young men were washing sheep, and a brood of fluffy ducklings were dancing among the ripples made by the heavy woolly creatures as they were tumbled into the water hurdled off for them, and martins were dipping their wings in the pool as they swept over it. Then, between the yellowing wheat and the brown hay, you push up the long slope of the Two Tree Field.

Just before you reach the first of the two trees you perceive, in a break of the high

woods, the bluish bare ridge of the North Downs, and the grey silhouette of St. Martha's chapel against the sky. Along that ridge, as the children knew, thousands of travellers in the old time—travellers from the west country or from over-seas—passed on their journey to the shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury, and rested under the shadow of St. Martha's; for that is a bit of the Pilgrims' Way.

From the second tree, the pathway mounts straight up the slope to a bright emerald door which is set in a dark green wall of oak and beech and pine at the top of the field. Some people say there is no door, that what seems so is only the path piercing the dark wall to a patch of sunlit hazels in the wood; but we have no patience with people who are always wanting to explain away things. In at the Emerald Door, and through the dim pines you go; and lo!

you are on Black Heath, which, with the white sand, worn into numberless cross-tracks by sheep and rabbit and human feet, and showing through grass and gorse, through green fronds of bracken and tufts of flowering ling, might well be called White Heath.

St. Martha's was again in sight, and as we toiled slowly over the rough ground of the Heath, I told the children how, ages before Thomas à Becket was born, this same Pilgrims' Way was a famous road which wound from the coast of Kent, right along the northern edge of the mighty forest of Anderida, into Devon and Cornwall.

The ancient traders in Cornish tin used to travel that way; and sometimes they were attacked by robbers who were beaten off, and sometimes they were killed among the hills.

How could any one know that for certain? Why, because there were ingots of tin—

shaped like knuckle-bones, in the Phœnician fashion—blocks of tin which the traders must have buried when the alarm was given, and which have been found beside the track.

There are huge old yew-trees, too, along the route. Some say the Druids planted these; but others say they grew naturally, and that the Druids, who could find here no great boulders for their standing-stones and circles, cut down the yews they did not want and left the rest growing in rings and avenues.

The sound of Latin once was as familiar along this way as the song of the nightingale in the May nights is still; and just as the old traders left their ingots of tin, so the old Romans left their urns and mosaic pavements to tell of their presence.

Then there are said to be fruit trees

among the wildwood which fringes the old road. It was the Canterbury Pilgrims who are believed to have dropped the seeds from which these sprang, as far back, perhaps, as seven hundred years ago, when the great festival of St. Thomas was fixed for July 7.

I said nothing, however, about Bunyan having got his idea of the "Pilgrim's Progress" from the Pilgrims' Way. The marshes at Shalford may have been a veritable Slough of Despond, and there may have been a Doubting Castle at Dorking, and "wicket-gates" are common everywhere, but the whole story is a rank heresy.

Sweet was the fruity smell of the pines in the hot sun. A fresh breeze tempered the shadowless glare, and far away, in some pleasant tent of green, the cuckoo called with a muffled note.

Underfoot the spider had spread curious patches of iridescence. These, when you came to look, were made by his web, stretched flat on the low wiry heath; and he himself lurked stealthily in his well, in a corner of his glistening trap.

Wild roses built wonderful mounds of fairy colour on the waste. Here and there, to Winifred's horror, honeysuckle and deadly nightshade were entangled in the same clump of bushes, for deadly nightshade, as she gravely warned me, is so venomous that it may be fatal even to touch it with a finger. Once or twice I gathered wild flowers, the names of which I wanted to know. "Why, father," she cried, laughing, "you are as fond of flowers in your hat as Plantagenet!"

Skirting the corner of Farley Heath and passing through Farley Green, we came to the shadow of a huge beech about midway

to the Hurtwood; and here we rested, and refreshed ourselves on the locusts and wild honey.

There is something curiously unreal about the colouring of the trunk and branches of a big beech-tree. One could fancy that it had been whitewashed long ago, and that the rains of many seasons had only at last begun to restore some of the primeval colouring. The thick twisted roots of this beech of ours made a ladder down the steep bank into the road, and in a few moments the "chawldren" were snugly nestled in the meshes half-way up the bank. Guy was satisfied with a small cavern scooped by the rain out of a ledge of friable sandstone.

As we rested we heard the clanking of a bell, and a flock of sheep came down the road and passed.

They were driven by a very aged

"Heathen," as Winifred delights (among ourselves) to call these dwellers on the Heath—an earth-coloured, shrivelled, wiry little man, who indeed looked so old that he might well have been a survivor of the ancient men of the real heathen time.

Away in the east there was a gloom of thunder, and I ventured to ask this antique shepherd whether we might expect a storm. He shook his grey head as he glanced at the sky. "No; the South-east do mostly bring blight," he said. "It's the South-west that do give us rain, and we wants en badly." I thought of the horrible bronze demon of the South-west wind which the Chaldeans used to hang out of door or window as a talisman against the blast of the desert. If these "Heathens" were to make an image of the South-west wind, it would take the shape of a beautiful goddess breathing soft airs and showers,

and they would worship her with garlands of wild flowers and little sheafs of grass and green corn.

After a stiff shove up the powdery road, for the ground rises all the way, we came at last to the high pines of the Hurtwood, and the wayside banks matted with the small green leaves and spangled with the pink little globes of the berry from which it derives its name. For, in spite of the maps, the Hurtwood is not the Hartwood, and it is not called the Hurtwood because some royal hunter, as Phyllis conjectures, was hurt there, but because "hurts" is a corruption of "whorts," and "whorts" is the short for "whortleberries."

The cuckoo shifted about the dusky coombes and steep hillocks as the youngsters took off shoes and socks, kilted their dresses, and danced among the sand and pine needles.

Then a pleasant fancy occurred to them. They tied bunches of blossoming ling to their hazel sticks, and gave Guy a rod of foxglove. This was the Pilgrims' Way, and they were Canterbury Pilgrims.

"Whortleberry Pilgrims, I think," said Winifred.

"It doesn't matter," replied Phyllis; "come along, Brother Greatheart," and Guy trod warily, with his soft feet wincing at the bits of dry wood.

"We should not go to an holy place without singing an holy song," said Winifred. "Ah, little Brother, is the way painful? It would be worse if you had peas in your shoes. But come, you shall bathe your feet in the healing sand."

"We are such very poor pilgrims," continued Phyllis, "that we have no choice but to go barefoot." Then perceiving our preparations for lunch: "O fair and noble

woman"—to her aunt—"may we beg a cup of cold water from your well, and a crust of bread from your store? Come, Brother Chatterbox and Brother Greatheart, this good queen will help us."

Brother Greatheart, however, was busy with sand and fir-cones making "a pilgrim pie" for his own delectation; and he did not feel disposed to abandon it for any week-day fare that even a queen could bestow.

"Come along, little Child of Angels," said Winifred coaxingly; but Greatheart turned a deaf ear.

"The Babe of Eden will not come, mother," Winifred reported.

"Then let us make merry ourselves," cried Phyllis, "for the way is long."

When Greatheart heard me "hopping" the ginger-beer and saw the oranges and bananas, he thought better of it and came up to our palace of oak, where fair couches

of bracken and heather were spread for the pilgrim guests.

Phyllis noticed his hands. "O royal woman," she said, "give me thine outer raiment that I may wipe the sand from his hands;" then she added presently, "No matter, I have cleansed them in the bracken."

The time went quickly and gaily in all sorts of sports and nonsense.

Greatheart resumed pilgrim-pie making, or took a rest in some wayside chantry among the oak roots.

The "chawldren" played at tin-traders and ancient British marauders on a pine-covered mound.

Mother lay back against the fallen tree which was our palace, and dozed like the *Belle au bois dormant.*

I smoked and took surreptitious notes, for this was a day I should be glad to

remember in every little detail of sight and sound and feeling.

At last when shoes and socks had been put on again, and Greatheart had been strapped into his mail-cart, with his rod of foxglove stuck up beside him like a flowery thyrsis, I found that the "chawldren" had wandered off into the pages of "The Heroes." Mother was the fair Danae; I was old Chiron the Centaur, Winifred and Phyllis were Perseus and Theseus, and Guy was "the one Chiron loved best, little Achilles, the too wise child."

As we trudged merrily homeward I overheard Perseus telling Phyllis: "To-day I have slain two oxen, and watched the spotted snake change its skin." To which Theseus was somewhat at a loss for an answer, I thought, for Phyllis has not read the whole of "The Heroes" yet.

In the evening, after tea, I went out for

a stroll by myself, for one never really tires of these Heaths and sandy lanes full of flowers.

I met little children, who had got back from school, playing in wild green places or driving the slow friendly cows to some fresh evening pasture. They paused or got up to smile and drop a curtsey.

Out of tangles of greenery a curl of blue smoke arose and betrayed a quaint timbered cottage which, if a hen had not run across my path, I should probably have passed unnoticed earlier in the day, so thick is the foliage.

Young lads, returning from work, went by with a salute, and it was pleasant to observe their shy clean eyes and girlish faces. Weary as the farm labourer or woodman must have been, his spirit was light enough to let him be companionable. Sweet are the Surrey hills and the wild acres of moorland

and the stretches of dingle and forest, and good and kindly are the Surrey folk.

Coming home through the dusk of the avenue of elms, I saw a mail-cart which I could pick out from a thousand, and in the still evening air I heard a brief dialogue :

"I thought it was pappa," said Guy; "and it is a gempy" (gentleman).

"It isn't a gempy," said mother, "it's pappa!"

But even this disparagement of two generations did not cast a shadow on the brightness of my Red-Letter Day.

And, after all, Guy makes up for it handsomely when he is in bed ; for, after seizing my hands and squeezing them to his breast, he sits up and kisses the palms, kisses the backs, kisses my face, kisses the top of my head, and at last exhausts himself in a gush of affection : "I simply like you, pappa!"

THE FIRST PARTING

As I sit near the white and red roses in the cool green of the garden I am troubled in my mind. I try to divert thought by noting that in the last decade of July the sparrows seem to nest about half-past seven, after a good deal of chatter in the trees. Now it is eight, and there is a clear grey sky, with pearly drifts and pinkish clouds; and the martins are racing overhead, high and silent. Far beneath them come suddenly, in rushes, flights of hilarious swifts, screaming and laughing like girls let loose from school. Just for an instant as they pass I hear the whiff of their wings.

It is no use; the very swifts remind me of the child. Even the long sunny weeks

among the hills and pinewoods do not seem to have been of much benefit. "Growing too fast," they say; pale and easily tired, and too excitable, I can see plainly enough; and these hot days do not agree with her, though she says she likes them.

We wait and watch; and July effects no change. August comes with the red rowan berries and cooler air, but she seems no better; and it becomes clear to us that the wisest course is to send her to the seaside till Christmas.

W. V. is, of course, delighted at the idea. The cliffs, the sands, the great waters, the magical ships sailing east and west, are anticipations of unspeakable rapture. We look for Broadstairs in the atlas; as we walk through our poor woods, from which the glamour seems now to have exhaled, like the dew from the grass of the morning, all our talk is of the sea, and brown mariners

from foreign waters, and white sails, and sand-castles, and wading, and donkey rides on the shore. I fear that as she will be at school she will not find that every day will be a holiday, but she is overjoyed at the thought of a change and new companions. "Of course" she is sorry to go away from home and to leave us, but Christmas will soon be here, and "of course" we shall go and see her at the half-term.

The day of parting comes in September, and she is radiant. The day is dull, but her little head is full of sunshine. At the London terminus her mother remarks, "What a dirty station this is!" but London is paved with gold and roofed with sapphire for her. One must admit that it is not sylvan, but the excuse comes readily: "Oh, well, mother, you couldn't expect to find green pastures and shepherds and lambs on the platform, could you?"

Poor little woman, so eager to fly away from the old woods and familiar nest, so easily caught by the glitter of change, by the mere sound of the word Sea!

At home one small mortal goes about the house wondering, missing the accustomed voices and the faces he has seen daily since the beginning of creation. He has promised to be very good till mother comes home, but he is puzzled by the silence, the vanished presences, the strange gaps left in his tiny world. He creeps under the table, and takes his wooden horse with him for companionship. Who can guess what passes between the two in that primeval rock-shelter?

When I return from town I find him breathing very heavily, almost sobbing, as he tells me, "Mingie gone 'chool! Mamma gone 'chool." He repeats the phrase in grievous whispers to himself. At night before he falls asleep, he weeps the first

tears of bereavement, and at last drops off into slumber with a bitter sigh: "Gone 'chool!"

He is more cheerful in the morning, but the mysterious sense of loss and desolation has not been washed away in sleep. He has a droll way of putting his hands together with the palms open upward, and cooing, "O-o-oh, pappa!" as if he were offering up his whole heart to you; but when I have taken him on my knee and cuddled him, he begins his tragic refrain, like a Greek chorus, "Mingie gone 'chool! Mamma gone 'chool!"

It is Saturday, so we may go into the forest together, to see some of the old friends whom he can greet with his favourite, "Hallo!" He can still say, "Ha'o, Mist' Oak! Ha'o, Lady Birch!" but alas, the birds and the flowers have all "gone 'chool."

A small boy, of friendly disposition, to

whom he shouts "Ha'o, boy!" smiles at him and stops to speak, and he unfolds his trouble to his sympathetic face—"Mingie gone 'chool!"

It is just a year since Mingie and I, with Guy in his mail-cart, went through this same underwood. Here was the spot where she threw down a piece of flint—"fire-stone"—and was sadly disappointed that it did not burst into flames. There were the pools showing glimpses of fairyland, which she afterwards made pictures of, so that we might remember them when we grew old. It was here that in the cold days, at the close of October she found a benumbed butter-fly and held it till the warmth of her hand revived it, and it fluttered away. Here was the sheltered dingle, so dry and plea-sant in July, where she showed me "fairy houses," and composed me extempore poems, while Guy slept under his white awning.

The "poems," joyously free from the trammels of rhyme and metre, were after this fashion:—

"The Oak-men are always in the wood under their spreading trees, their high roof. In autumn we go and gather their cups and saucers." ("The acorns, you know, father," she adds by way of annotation.)

"All day long, if it rains, the Fairies sit under their fungus umbrellas of yellow and reddy-brown." ("I don't know why any one should call them toadstools, do you, father?") "They gather honey from the bees, and drink the rain from the grass."

"Guy looks with sunny eyes of blue at the Oak-men and the trees. The Oak-men laugh when they see Guy looking."

The reddy-brown and yellow toadstools are still there; the acorn-cups; the fairy

houses, and the high roof; but alas, alas, Oak-men and Fairies and all gentle spirits of the rain-pool and the woodlands have vanished with W. V. They have all "gone 'chool."

Sometimes for whole days Guy will forget his bereavement, and then, just as we are saying, "How soon things slip out of their memories!" we hear him telling the gardener or a tradesman's boy, in mournful tones and with a hopeless shake of his head, "Mingie gone 'chool," or whispering the same reminder to himself or to his playthings.

And the radiant W. V., how does she fare on the shores of old romance? Her first letter, which reaches us a week after her absence, is not so wildly hilarious as one would have anticipated.

(First page) My dear Mother,

I am not *very* happy hear and I do wish you wood come and take me baak with you.

(Second page) I am so *very* unhappy. Mother dear *do do* come take me baak *do do* Mother Dear I cry every night and I cannot helpit. I *am* glad to hear that *dear* Baby is well and do come and take me baak *do do* Mother I shall die if you dount

Give my love to every one

Your loveing little doughter

WINIFRED.

do come

Her mother cried over that letter, as mothers will, but Guy and I had already supped our sorrow; and though we cannot help muttering in silent rooms, we know that Christmas will soon come, and that long before Christmas, Mingie will have recovered from her home-sickness.

WINIFRED AND GUY.
September 1897.

There is a dense fog on Christmas Day, and the gas has to be lit early in the afternoon. It is delightful to watch the small people sitting at the table decked in Christmas-tree jewelry, cracker caps and sashes of many colours—W. V. looking rosy and strong, and the boy tipsy with joy to see her again.

Mingie is playing with her enchanted people. It isn't quite Fairyland, but a borderland of spells and charms, with Brownies and Pixies and Oak-men. There is a forest of mistletoe, holly and red berries, and narcissus (in vases); and on the edge of the forest a lake, and on the lake the Queen of Pixies sails in a magic barge (a swan-shaped salt-cellar); and a donkey (a prince bewitched) walks on the lake beside her, and there are Pixies in a wicker boat, which does not sink, "because the water runs out of it as fast as it runs in."

On this memorable day, Guy gets a new name—"Biboffski," on account of his post-prandial clamour, "Bib off! bib off!"

"Biboffski, the great Russian poet?" suggests some one.

"Oh no," says W. V. "It is Biboffski, the mighty hunter!"

"Not at all," says mother; "Biboffski is the heavenly babe—the Babe-of-Sky!"

Whereupon we all laugh, and Guy most gleefully of all, and we feel glad that "Mingie has gone 'chool"—and come back again.

SANTA CLAUS AND THE BABE

MINGIE'S was the first of the Christmas cards to arrive. It came early on Christmas Eve. Mademoiselle had sent it from Rouen, and she must have chosen the loveliest she could buy, for when the box was opened and the card unfolded, there, within a ring of Angels, was the Stable of Bethlehem, with the Babe in the manger, and a star gleaming over the roof.

Mingie was in an ecstasy; Phyllis, her cousin, was delighted; and even Guy Greatheart, though the little man was too young to understand, clapped his hands and cried, "Pretty, pretty!"

It was placed on the music-cabinet, so that the maiden-hair fern drooped over it,

and made it look like a scene in a forest among the lonely hills.

And there, after many last looks, the children left it when they went up to bed.

It had been very cold all day, and it was snowing when mother and auntie and uncle set out for the watch-night service. Father preferred a book by the warm fireside.

"Then," said mother, "you might leave the door ajar, so that you can hear the children. And won't you send a line to Tumble-Down Dick?"

Father and Tumble-Down Dick had quarrelled long ago, and it seemed no longer possible to say anything that could make any difference.

"You know that I am in the right," said father, shaking his head and frowning.

"Yes, dear, I know," said mother; "but when one is in the right, it is so much easier to be large-minded."

Father smiled grimly at the crafty reply, but said nothing.

Long afterwards, as he sat thinking, two little white figures crept down the stairs (which creaked dreadfully), and stole into the drawing-room. Then father heard the striking of a match, and going out to see what it meant, found Mingie and Phyllis.

"Oh, father," Mingie explained, "we awoke and remembered that there was no stocking hung up for the Babe; so we thought we would each hang up one of ours for him. Santa Claus is sure to see them, isn't he?"

Father laughed and carried the two back to bed.

Then he went and looked at the Stable and the Babe and the stockings.

Over the roof the Star of the East was shining, as it shone two thousand years ago.

The song the Angels were singing was one of peace and good-will.

Then father wrote to Tumble-Down Dick, and hurried through the snow to catch the last post.

Tumble-Down Dick never knew what had induced father to write that letter.

THREE STEPS AND A LITTLE DOOR

I KNOW not from what dim days on the furthest verge of memory there comes floating to me an odd rhyme about some small Scotch bairn whose story has vanished with the lost legends of strath and corrie:—

> "*Tommy Gorrie—*
> *Went—up—three—steps;*
> *And in at a little doorie.*"

Even at this distance of time it seems to me that I can bring back the feeling of delight and wonderment and curiosity which those words awakened in my childish soul. They were a sort of spell; for when I

repeated them to myself, there, in front of me, set in a long high wall of grey stone, was the little door with its pointed arch—a door of solid oak almost bleached by the weather from brown to grey; and there were the three stone steps leading to it.

The other evening I overheard Carrie telling Boy-Beloved the rhyme, and now Winifred goes up and down the house repeating it.

Of Tommy Gorrie I was often told—just as Carrie now tells Boy-Beloved—that *he* never did any of the discreditable and unruly things of which I appear to have been guilty. Tommy Gorrie never said "No;" he never screamed or stamped in great wrath; he liked everything that was good for him; he did not need to be told twice.

I am in doubt as to how Boy-Beloved regards the exemplary Tommy. "You mustn't crumble your biscuit on the cloth," said

Carrie. "Mustn't I crumble my biscuit?" asked Boy-Beloved; "didn't Tommy Gorrie crumble his biscuit?" "No, he didn't." "Didn't he? Naughty boys do!" For my part, I was not emulous of Tommy Gorrie; I should have taken *no* interest in him if it had not been that he went up those three steps and in at that little door. But that was an adventure which might well excite the envy and admiration of the most revolutionary little Radical.

What did Tommy Gorrie see when he went in?

No one could tell me. I used to stare for ten minutes together at the door I could picture before me, and wish it would open—were it but a hand's breadth—so that I might have just one glint of the wonderland on the other side of the wall; but it only ended in some one coming to see what new scheme of mischief was keeping me so quiet.

At night I would dream that I was going up the steps, and that the door was yielding to the push of my strong hand; but either I awoke before it opened, or the dream took another turn, and I found myself as far as ever from solving the mystery.

Those three steps and that little door were the imperishable romance of my childhood. Had my curiosity been gratified I should have forgotten all about them; but as no one could tell me, and as I never found the door while awake and could never enter by it while asleep, I had for years an inexhaustible subject for my day-dreams.

Since I have grown up I have had several curious reminders of that old rhyme. It was with a singular shock of reminiscence that I read Goethe's sketch in his Autobiography, of the enchanted garden which he entered by the little brown wicket in the Bad Wall; and of his complete failure to

find the entrance a second time, although he had noted the extremely old nut-trees, whose green branches hung down over the wall on the opposite side of the way, and the niche with the fountain.

And almost as much like a page from my own experience was the passage in Mr. Pater's idyll, "The Child in the House," in which he tells of such a vision of loveliness as Tommy Gorrie must have had when he went up the three steps.

For "it happened that, as he walked one evening, a garden gate, usually closed, stood open; and lo! within, a great red hawthorn in full flower, embossing heavily the bleached and twisted trunk and branches, so aged that there were but few green leaves thereon—a plumage of tender crimson fire out of the heart of the dry wood. The perfume of the tree had now and again reached him, in the currents of the wind, over the wall,

and he had wondered what might be behind it."

But beautiful as that sight must have been, and sweet as were that child's dreams, loitering all night "along a magic roadway of crimson flowers," my three steps and the little doorie gave promise of a surprise more strange, and of a more rapturous joy.

Only once have I seen in print anything that came near to the glad mystery hidden behind my leagues of lofty stone wall. Any one who is curious will find it in Carlyle's translation of Tieck's little masterpiece, "The Elves."

When Tommy Gorrie went up three steps and in at a little doorie, he must have been as fortunate as little Mary when she ran across the bridge. He must have met a glittering elf-maiden, and swung with her on the tops of the trees which she made spring up with a stamp of her fairy foot,

and seen the dwarfs carrying sacks of gold-dust, and watched the water-children swimming and sporting and blowing on crooked shells. Only I do not believe that *his* story ended with the sorrowful disenchantment of Mary's. The magic garden into which Tommy Gorrie's door opened never lost a green leaf or a coloured blossom, and no wicked weather of the world ever reached it, and Tommy——

Well, as for Tommy, I don't believe he never said "No," and liked everything that was good for him, and did not need to be told twice. I think he was no better and no worse than Boy-Beloved, or even than myself. I think Tommy is alive yet, and never grows any older. I think he spends his time in seeking for those three steps and going in at that little door.

What happens then I don't know; but I fancy he gets tired with play and falls asleep;

and when he awakes he finds himself outside, with just a dim, dreamy recollection of something strange and delightful, and so he sets off again to find the three steps. And as long as there are children Tommy Gorrie will be a child, and will continue to go up three steps and in at a little doorie.

There is a curious tenacity and suggestiveness about rhymes, and this of Tommy Gorrie hitches itself on to all sorts of people and incidents. When I read a page of a beautiful book, I nod across to the invisible author: "You went up three steps and in at a little doorie." When I meet a couple of lovers in the wood, I smile to myself: "You are looking for three steps, eh?" When I pass a Sister of Charity, or watch a working woman rocking a babe in her arms, I think: "And you too have been up the three steps."

To-night even, as I sat with my small son

on one knee and his sister on the other, and my wife asked, "Which way did you come home?" I replied, somewhat absently it might seem, "Up three steps and in at a little doorie;" but her laugh showed that she understood.

ך

Our Poems

OUR POEMS

INSIGNIFICANT as they may be in themselves, the verses which follow are to me so full of sad and of happy memories, that I cannot forbear giving them a place in these pages. As I read them once more the leaves of vanished summers are green on the trees, the snow of a winter forgotten drifts against the window; the day, the spot, the bright young faces are all brought back, with the light of love and gladness upon them. And nothing of the least of these would I willingly lose.

THE RING-FENCE

Oh, happy garden trees,
By dim degrees
Your subtle branches, muffling me about,
Shut all my neighbours out!

Not that I love them less, but they
Being fenced away,
'Tis sweet to feel in oh! how small a round
May peace and joy abound.

HOME

East or West, at home is best!
Let the norland blizzard blow
From the icy mountain crest,
While I wade through drifts of snow,

Smoke I'd see—blue smoke alone—
From my own chimney gladlier than
Cheeriest fire on the hearthstone
Of another and better man.

THE MIRACULOUS

I left her in the dark to find
Her own way home; she had no fear.
I followed noiselessly behind;
She never dreamed that I was near.

I let her have her childish will;
But had she cried, why in a wink!—
That would have seemed a miracle.
So in our little life, I think.

BEDTIME

She kneels and folds her baby hands,
And gaily babbling lisps her prayer.
What if she laughs? God understands
The joyous heart that knows no care.

Her prayer is like a new-fledged bird
That cannot flutter to its tree;
But God will lift it, having heard,
Up to the nest where it would be.

CAROL

When the herds were watching
In the midnight chill,
Came a spotless lambkin
From the heavenly hill.

Snow was on the mountains,
And the wind was cold,
When from God's own garden
Dropped a rose of gold.

When 'twas bitter winter,
Houseless and forlorn
In a star-lit stable
Christ the Babe was born.

Welcome, heavenly lambkin;
Welcome, golden rose;
Alleluia, Baby,
In the swaddling clothes!

SANTA CLAUS

Wee Flaxen-poll and Golden-head,
They both are sleeping, rosy-red;
And loving hands that make no noise
Have filled each stocking full of toys.

Oh, think!—unslumbering and forlorn,
Perchance one little Babe new-born
Lies wondering that we never saw
Him too, in spirit, in the straw.

IN THE STORM

Thro' half the wild March night the sleet
Against the shuddering windows beat.
"Pity," a small voice prayed, "dear God,
Our blackbird in the ivy-tod!"

The blackbird, darkling in her nest,
Felt five green eggs beneath her breast,
And knew no cold: through all the storm
Five coals of mothering kept her warm.

ALMOND BLOSSOM

Among the snow-flakes, whirling white,
I saw a vision of delight—
All clotted by the wintry shower,
An almond-tree laughed out in flower!

Blow, wintry years, I shall not care,
If I the almond's joy may share,
And break in bloom at heart, although
My aged head be white with snow!

MY FRIEND *

I saw a little raindrop
Upon a grassy blade;
I touched it not, but in my heart
A home for it I made.

For mirrored in the raindrop
I saw the skies descend;
And Heaven was there. So in my heart
It came to be my friend.

* *See p.* 77.

GARDEN-FIRES

What though the snow gleams on the hill!
The sweet west wind blows fresh and clear;
The world feels new.
Tree-tops are full of heavenly blue;
The hollyhock and daffodil
Are shooting leaf and spear;
The rosebush starts from sleep.
And, redding plots and walks,
The gardener rakes into a fiery heap
The dead year's withered leaves and shrivelled stalks.

Blow, wind of heaven, and make me whole!
Oh, blue of heaven, fill full my soul!
And, while the new-born flower springs,
I too will burn all dead and worthless things.

APRIL SONG—I.

Little Boy Blue, come blow, come blow
Through wood and field your magic horn!
The almond blossom is chilled with snow,
The green bud seared on hazel and thorn.

We want to see the spring clouds go
Like lambs through sunny fields of morn;
So wake, you Little Boy Blue, and blow
Through wood and field your April horn!

APRIL SONG—II.

How glad I shall be
When summer comes round—
The leaf on the tree,
The flower on the ground;

A welkin of glass,
A wind from the west,
A nest in the grass,
And eggs in the nest;

Lambs leaping for joy,
My boy in his pram,
My big baby boy,
Half wild for a lamb!

The snow's on the ground,
No leaf's on the tree;
When summer comes round
How glad shall I be!

IN THE WOODLANDS

In the forest lawns I see
Little ring-plots fenced around,
So that shrub and sapling tree
Thrive in safe and happy ground;

And I wonder, Cannot I
Keep some little place apart,
Open to the wind and sky,
For the growing of my heart?

MARTIN-TIDE

When morning rain has washed with sheen
Each blade and flower, and made them sweet,
And twinkling trees stand wet and green,
And rain-pools sparkle in the street,
Oh, then beside some lakelet filled
With quivering shapes of mirrored leaves,
The martin gathers mud to build
His hanging nest beneath the eaves.

Then, in a little, you shall hear,
Awaking at the break of light,
Low twitterings, very soft and clear,
For joy of five pure eggs of white;
And so take heart for the new day
That oh, such little things suffice—
Eggs, raindrops, particles of clay—
To make a bower of paradise.

MAY-MORNING RAIN

Oh sweet, oh sweet, oh sweet the Spring,
When angels make the world anew,
And gladness gleams from everything
Between the living green and blue;

And airs that breathed in Paradise
Blow draughts of life through shower and shine,
And the five gifts of sense suffice
To make mere consciousness divine!

Oh, fresh on leaf and blossom-flake
The rain of early morning glints;
It lies about in little lakes,
It fills the ruts and horseshoe prints;

With leaf and bloom its depths are lit—
How magically deep they seem!
A flock goes by: far down in it
Glide sheep and lambs as in a dream.

A sparrow comes, and bathes and drinks;
Wildly he flounces in his joy,
Breaks the clear glass, and little thinks
What fairy scenes his freaks destroy.

Yet who'd begrudge him? Off he flies!
And once again, most beautiful,
Leaf, blossom, clouds, and sunny skies
Are pictured in the little pool;

And, wandering in some fairy deep
Where grass is sweet and sweet the air,
As Winnie knows, the herd and sheep
And bleating lambs are also there.

FELLOW-FEELING

Poor little soul! We kissed the place
To make the smarting forehead whole,
Then dried the May and April face,
Saying, Poor little soul!

So soothed, he felt within him stir
Some pity for his mate in woe,
And went and kissed the baluster,
Sighing, Poor itty so'!

IN THE UNDERWOOD

"I fought you was quite gone away!"
He said, with blue eyes big with tears;
Then hugged and kissed my hands. I'll play
No more upon his childish fears.

For, as he frolicked through the wood,
I watched from leafy lurking-place,
And saw how, missing me, he stood
With startled eyes and working face.

And thought how soon the day will come,
When shadowed by the cypress-tree
I shall be very cold and dumb,
And he bereft of power to see.

And I, too stark to breathe or move,
Shall watch his piteous dismay,
And hear his sob of frightened love—
"Pappa!" grow faint and die away!

FROM FLOWER TO FLOWER

When morning comes with golden air,
Before the garden shadows wane,
Her tenderness delights to bear
From flower to flower the gift of rain.

And God, who gives in gracious wise,
Her own sweet gift on her bestows;
Joy flowers, like speedwells, in her eyes,
And in her heart love, like a rose.

THE ANGLER

On pool and pinewood, clearly grey,
The twilight deepened, hushed and cool;
The trout swam high in languid play;
Ring-ripples stirred the darkening pool.

And as I watched in pleased content,
Dim memories of bygone things
Rose softly, and through my spirit sent
A glimmering joy in trembling rings.

THE WATER-OUSEL

Beneath the brook, with folded wings
The Ousel walks; and one may hear,
In happy hour, the song he sings,
Submerged, yet elfin-sweet and clear.

Dear child, I see in those fresh eyes
Far down, drawn deep from troublous things,
Your spirit walking, ousel-wise,
In dreamy song with folded wings.

RED-CAP CHERRIES

Red-cap Cherries, hanging high
In the azure and the sun,
Cuckoo now has ceased his cry—
Now his summer song is done.

He with cherries plumped his crop
Three times—so he calls no more.
We'll be dumb too, if you'll drop,
Filling thrice our pinafore.

A CHILD'S SONG*

The little white clouds are playing to-day,
Playing to-day, playing to-day;
They call to the flowers, Come out and play,
Come out and play!

Come out and play, for the sun is rolled,
Sun is rolled, sun is rolled,
Thro' meadows of blue, like a ball of gold,
A ball of gold.

The flowers reply, We see you on high,
See you on high, see you on high,
We flutter our leaves, and long to fly,
And long to fly.

We dance in the breeze, pirouette and sway,
'ouette and sway, 'ouette and sway,
Pretending we're clouds, and with you at play,
With you at play!

* The first stanza and the "ball of gold" in the second are Winifred's.

TO WINIFRED

When I am dead,
And you are old,
You'll sit as we are sitting now,
Close to the fire, hearing the wind blow cold;
And you will stroke a golden head,
And, suddenly, remembering how
I fondled yours, become at last aware
How dear to me was every single hair.

When I am dead,
And you are old,
You'll clasp in yours a little hand—
A nestling hand, sweet as a flower to hold—
The pretty fingers you will spread,
And kissing them will understand
How kissing yours, I found therein a joy
Beyond the world's to give, or to destroy.

THE LOOK

Beside the fire he sits between my feet,
And, snuggling, feels how winter can be sweet.
Then leaning back—such love in his clear eyes!—
"You look at me a little bit!" he cries.
"I have *been looking, dear!" "You look again!"*

O least importunate of tiny men,
Have eyes such power? Can such a trifling thing
So lift up your fond heart upon the wing?
Yet I that know Whose eyes upon me brood
Have never felt this child's beatitude.

THE CALL

I walked with one whose child had lately died.
We passed the little folk i' the street at play,
When suddenly a clear voice "Father!" cried;
The man turned quick and glad; sighed;
moved away.

I spoke not, but 'twas given me to discern
The love that watches through th' eternal years;
God surely so must start and quickly turn
Whene'er the cry of "Father!" strikes His
ears.

THE MANTELPIECE

The polished oaken lintel showed
Dusk forest, and a winding road.
The grain o' the oak-heart only? Nay,
We *trod that road but yesterday.*
Through hushed and haunted trees it wound,
To wishing-wells and faerie-ground.

The elfin horns blew crystal-clear!
No more we two those horns shall hear.
Her sprightly feet are lapped in clay—
Joy's very feet! O Yesterday!
Beloved playmate, are you dead?
Winifred! Winifred!

THE WELLS OF ELIM

Elim, Elim! Through the sand and heat
I toil with heart uplifted, I toil with bleeding feet,
For Elim, Elim! at the last, I know
That I shall see the palm-trees, and hear the waters flow.

Elim, Elim! Grows not here a tree,
And all the springs are Marah, and bitter thirst to me;
But Elim, Elim! in thy shady glen
Are twelve sweet wells of water, and palms threescore and ten.

Elim, Elim! though the way be long,
Unmurmuring I shall journey, and lift my heart in song;
And Elim, Elim! all my song shall tell
Of rest beneath the palm-tree, and joy beside the well.

GLOAMING

The green sky!
The far hills!
My heart fills;
I sigh—sigh!

Spirits blest
Surely lie
In green sky
In God's rest.

My heart fills;
I sigh—sigh.
The green sky!
The far hills!

Sub Umbra Crucis

SUB UMBRA CRUCIS

HERE by the green mound where she lies, the cry of Pliny rises in my heart, "Give me some fresh comfort, great and strong, such as I have never yet heard or read. Everything that I have read or heard comes back now to my memory, but my sorrow is too deep to be reached by it."

But oh, mothers on whose wet pillows sit the little shadows of lost babes, how shall I have better comfort than you, for whom no one has found oblivion in Lethe, or balm in Gilead? I know, and I understand, with what sweet and sorrowful dreams you have sought to dull the edge of anguish; why

you hung tiny moccasins above the little grave; how you filled the cradle with feathers and decked it with toys, and carried it on your back, so that the wearied baby-spirit might find warmth and rest when it would. I know, and I understand, how, looking at the sunrise of the new day, you made its glittering fields the land of the bright little creatures of whom you had been bereaved.

These of old were your dreams, waking and sleeping; and these you gave for solace to those who grieved with you, and to all who in days to come should have an empty chair in the house, and toys with which no one should care to play any more. And we too, of a later time, seek for relief in the same fond way, and try to quench our thirst from the well of dreams. But it is only in our own dreams that our pain is assuaged, not in the dreams of any other.

Oh, friend, let me thank you for your tender words. Again and again I have read them :—" It is a lovely face, and the soul in the face is more beautiful than the face itself. Strange, how extraordinarily near I feel to that girl. Her death affected me more than any death outside my own household. To see her face in that photograph made me feel it still more. To lose her was a tragedy. But as I looked at her I felt also that her happiness was now supreme, and her love for all she loved tenfold. Yet —would she had stayed. She looks immortal in her picture, and I suppose she was sorely needed where she lives now."

Do not blame me if I am not made happy by your words ; nor by yours, dear woman, who write to me from your lonely mission-house in the far East :—" Perhaps, too, as the disciples were tired and cross, and there was no other way but that one of calling

unto them a little child, so perchance Jesus called your little one to teach the angels something they, too, would not understand; and, perhaps, no other little child would do."

Dreams, dreams, and not *my* dreams—dreams that might give rest if one knew that they were only a little more than dreams.

Surely sorrow is fractious and hard to please, for I must quarrel with you, old friend, who bid me be glad of heart, for now she is "removed from the evil to come," now she is "safe." Is that a worthy, and not a shallow comfort? Do you not see beneath it the selfishness and the cowardice that are glad to be set free from future responsibility? Why should we so disparage the dead, and discount God's purposes? Do you forget the poet's lines—

If he had lived, *you say—*
Well, well—if he had lived, what then?
Some men
Will always argue—yes, I know . . . of
course . . .
The argument has force.
If he had lived, he might have changed—
From bad to worse?
Nay, my shrewd balance-setter,
Why not from good to better?
Why not to best? to joy
And splendour? O, my boy!

And you who chide me gently, and bid me be a man and bear as a man, considering —oh, Job's comforter!—how, at the heart of it, sorrow is rooted in self, and when we mourn it is less for the lost than for the losers, shall I not also feel as a man? How shall I not "remember such things were, that were most precious to me?"

For whom should I lament? Not for

her—oh, not for her, for she is in Thy keeping, O Thou Light of the Dead. For whom should I lament, if not for the living who are left? Did we so lightly value Thy gift to us that when it was withdrawn we dried eyes scarcely wet, and straightway forgot that she had ever been flesh of our flesh and soul of our soul?

Oh, friend, whose hand hurts and does not heal, ape not a vain and foolish stoicism. God is not vexed by the tears whose fountains He has made. And if He who could raise from the dead was moved to tears beside the sepulchre at Bethany, who shall rebuke us that we weep rather for ourselves than for those who have been taken from us?

And you who, meaning well, but speaking not so well, write to me wondering why one who died so young should have lived at all, oh, do not ask for reasons. These things

are God's mysteries. As she herself used to say, "Our sense is nothing to God's; and though big people have more sense than children, the sense of all the big people in the world put together would be no sense to His. We are only little babies to Him; we do not understand Him at all."

Is it not enough to know that to be born is to enter into the birthright of a blessed immortality?

Oh, Thou whose shadow is death, whose shadow is immortality, "we do not understand Thee at all." But we know that Thou art good and wise and pitiful; and we believe that when Thou takest childhood in its blossom, and seemest to forget old age in weariness and penury, Thou hast Thy purpose for that with Thee, as Thou hast for this which awaits Thee.

And if we weep the loss of our little child, it is not that we would call her back, but

that it is a need of our nature to regret the beloved made invisible. Nay, if Thou shouldst promise, Call her and she shall return, we should be dumb with the dread of an unknown future, we should *not* call, we should leave her to Thy divine fatherhood.

And if in the dust and darkness of our souls we reach out our hands to her, it is but to know that she is happy, that it *is* well with her, that she is indeed with Thee.

And if we ask for a sign, it is but the longing of creatures who live and feel and know by the senses, to have through the senses an assurance of that which we believe in the spirit. Thou knowest our frame; remember that we are dust. Is it strange that we, too, should cry, *Lama sabachthani?*

And you, true friend and wise consoler, who bid me think of that little Agatha, "aged fourteen years," who sleeps in the

catacombs at Rome under that simple avowal of grateful hearts,

"*For whom thanks be to the Lœra and to Christ*,"

perhaps you perceived more clearly than I myself how much I had to be thankful for in this child.

When I ponder on all that I owe her, I seem to apprehend a strange and heavenly truth underlying one of the most savage superstitions of the Dark Ages. For you have not forgotten how when the walls of Copenhagen, as the legend tells, crumbled and fell as fast as they were built, an innocent little girl was set in her chair beside a table, where she played with her toys and ate the rosy apples they gave her while twelve master-masons closed a vault over her; and then the walls were raised, and stood firm for ever after. And so it may

sometimes be in the dispensations of providence that the lives of men can only be raised high and stable in virtue of the little child immured for ever within them.

Poor little shadow, with its apples and playthings! Poor little child, if still the walls crumble and fall.

They have finished the white cross upon her grave; they have set the marble curbs about her little plot of earth, and covered it with flowers.

The first sight of it shocked me in a manner that I could not have anticipated. I had learned to find a sort of comfort in the broken turf, the grassy clods, the new leaves of weeds springing between the clods and stones, the bees droning from flower to flower. These were in the rough but kindly way of nature. And the earth lay light—

light and warm and living in the sunshine. It is a foolish thing to say: to the green mound I had grown reconciled.

But now this heavy slab seemed the last seal set on the irretrievable. It was the visible, immovable symbol of that unseen door, which we *knew* was closed, but which, to our own hearts, we made-believe was not so surely closed but that it might miraculously fall open to our prayers. Oh, how many have known that unaccountable feeling of unreasoning expectation—to how many does it cling for months, for years—that, somehow, something is going to happen which will bring their dead children back to them again!

Heavily lay that slab upon me, until there dawned within me the memory of another grave, whither an angel "came, and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it."

How strange that *that* should ever have been written; for of the four who told the story of the tomb in the garden, three have been silent as to that heavenly vision; and a merciful thing it seemed—predestined, one almost dared to think, for such a time of trouble—that to one of the Evangelists it was given to use words which have power to change the stone of the last despair into a seat for an angel.

Deep in her garden I have buried a wisp of warm brown hair twined with a faded flower plucked in some New South Wales field and sent by a stranger who loved her.

Between the dark green ledges of the cedar which grows beyond her grave I see far below me the dome of St. Paul's, dream-like in the smoke and autumn haze; and the dim masses of the great city. How her eyes brightened with interest when she looked

on that romantic region of Dick Whittington's adventures.

On one of the steps of the cross is her name, with the date of birth and of death.

Not there, but in my heart, is written—

"*For whom thanks be to the Lord and to Christ.*"

The years will pass, and time will sweeten the memory of these things, till at last it will seem to me that I too "have been on the banks of Ulai, plucking an apple here and there."

W. V.

Here's a flower for you, lying dead,
Child, whom living I never met.
Friends a many I may forget—
Not you, little Winifred.

Men grow sick when they live alone,
And long for the sound of a childish voice.
And you—how often you've made me rejoice
In a simple faith like your own!

So here's a flower for you, Winifred—
Out of London, a violet—
Little child whom I never met,
Winifred, lying dead.

H. D. Lowry.

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